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OUR BABY.

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[Given with "Children's Prize," Jan., 1870.

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE.

EDITED BY J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.

1870

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. I.] JANUARY, 1870. [One Penny.

The Baby Monkey, from Life by F. W. KEYL.

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THE BABY MONKEY.

THE readers of *The Prize* most likely remember the very touching story of the monkey which saved a child from being burnt to death. The illustration was the nearly life-size head of the Rhesus monkey, a hardy fellow who inhabits the jungles of India. It is the common monkey of wild-beast shows, and the baby of our present illustration is of the same species. It was sketched from nature, not long ago, at the Zoological Gardens. It is earnestly to be hoped that a wild baby-monkey is not such a haggard little caricature as this imprisoned one. I had some raisins in my pocket, which I brought for the little fellow, and as soon as I gave him one, which he took with many side-looks and eye-blinkings at his mother, the latter came down, got hold of him, and, in spite of his protestations, took it out of his mouth and ate it. I tried in various ways to get him to have his share, but in vain; if I held some raisins in one hand to feed her, and offered him some with the other, the angry moving of her lips would send him to a remote corner of the cage, from whence he would look piteously at me. Yet she would nurse, and pet him and protect him if one pretended to touch him. Such fussy love, incapable of self-sacrifice, has passed into a proverb in Germany, and parents who only indulge their children for their own amusement are said to have nothing but monkey's love for them. Do not let us be hard, however, on the poor captives, for in a wild state the mutual attachment of mother and child is very strong. The mother would rather die than give up trying to carry the baby to a safe retreat, much as it hinders her own flight by its weight and clinging. If the mother is shot, the child will not leave the dead body to save itself, by following the flying herd. I fear that the idleness and weariness of captivity makes the monkey worse, as it does everybody else.

TWO CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

From the German of Volmar, by JAS. F. COBB, Esq.

IT was very silent in the little room, so still that one could plainly hear the low ticking of a clock which hung on the wall. The evening sun shone brightly in through the half-open window. It seemed as if his beams loved to linger in that little chamber. We will make use of their light in order to look round the room. It does not look very grand, but it is neither mean nor shabby; it would be best described by the word 'comfortable.' A pale-green paper covered the walls, on which hung a few pictures in black frames, among which was a head of Christ; plain furniture, a writing-table, muslin curtains, a white bed in the corner,—all spoke of rest and peace. But this calm was soon to be interrupted. A painful cough was heard from the bed, and then a faint voice cried 'Maria, my Maria!'

'Shall I fetch her to you?' said a young servant girl, who was seated at the foot of the bed, sewing; she is out in the garden.'

'Yes, Caroline, please do so.'

Caroline went, and soon came back with a blooming child of six, who threw both arms round her mother's neck, and said,—

'Oh, mother, I have made you a nosegay of quite little flowers, which I may gather, and you must be very much pleased with them;' and with these words, she place the flowers on the bed.

'Thank you, thank you, my darling child,' said the mother, pressing the child as firmly to her, as if she feared it might be taken away from her;—it seemed as if she wished to say a great deal more, but she leant back exhausted, clasped her hands, and murmured gently, 'Oh, I cannot.'

'What can you not, dear mother?' asked Maria; 'tell me, do you want a glass of water for the flowers? I will fetch you one; but I wish you would take them in your hand a little, then you would be able to see them and smell them.'

But the mother did not answer; faint and feeble she lay there, pressing her clasped

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hand upon her heart, as if she would still its restless throbbing. At last the tears forced themselves from her eyes, and ran slowly down her pale, wasted face.

'Mother, you are crying,' said Maria, sadly, as she tried gently to wipe away the tears with a pocket-handkerchief. 'Are you angry with me, mother?' she continued, as her mother was still silent.

'No, my child; but come, Caroline, lift her up upon my bed, here, —lie down by my side, I have much to tell you.'

With a face which seemed to be struggling between joy and sorrow, Maria came. It was a long time since she had been allowed to enter her mother's bed. She began to embrace her warmly with both arms, but she gave her pain; her poor delicate mother could not bear her embrace.

'Listen, Maria,' began Frau Werner, in a faint voice: 'when I had to go away to nurse your dear father, who was taken ill such a long way from us, you were very sad then: but I came back, though it was without your father, who, you know, has gone to heaven. And now, my child, I must go there too,—go to your dear father; how he will rejoice when I come to him!'

'Oh, mother!' exclaimed Maria, 'will you not take me with you? Do, do let me come too!'

'My child, I cannot take you with me, you must remain here with little Hans. Promise me that you will always stay with Hans. See, Hans has no one in the whole world except you; you must care for him, love him very much: promise me this.'

'Yes, I will do so,' answered the little girl. 'I will always dress him, and everything. But, mother, can you not take us both with you?'

'No, my child; it is a difficult, long journey, which I have before me.' Here Frau Werner sighed, and looked anxiously round her, till at last her gaze fell upon the picture of our Blessed Lord; there her eyes remained fixed for some time, as if they were drinking in comfort and strength.

'Mother! where, then, are you going?' now asked Maria,

'To heaven, by God's help, my child.'

'And why, then, can't you take Hans and me with you there?'

'Because only those whom God calls Himself can go to heaven; no others are permitted to go there. He has called me, and now He will very soon send and fetch me.'

Maria was silent, she seemed to be thinking; suddenly she said, 'Mother, will you stay there *very* long?'

'Very long, my sweet child; I shall never come back again.'

'And you will leave me quite alone, quite alone here?' asked Maria, with a face in which there was such terrible anguish that it was well her mother was not then looking at her, or she would have lost that composure which it had been so hard for her to keep up;—she answered softly, but with a firm voice, 'My child, I leave you here with your little brother, and cannot come back to you, but you may come to me in heaven; and, believe me, if you earnestly seek it, you will come there. But now go, I must rest quietly, I cannot talk any more.'

Caroline quietly took Maria up in her arms and carried her into another room some way off. It was well she did so, for the child, who had been quite quiet till now, burst out into such a terrible fit of crying that Caroline did not know what to do with her.

'My mother—my dear mother—stay here—do not go away—take me with you.' These were the only words which came from her lips. Caroline held her in her arms; tried to comfort her; wanted to give her strawberries and cream for supper; in vain: the child continued to weep, till after a long time she cried herself to sleep. The maid laid her down in bed and then went quickly to her mistress, who spoke no question, but her eyes asked, and Caroline answered,—

'She is asleep now.'

When Maria and Hans awoke the next morning, they had become a great deal poorer; the children had no longer any mother on earth: God had sent His angels during the night to bear the weary pilgrim into His heavenly kingdom. She had inquired about nothing more, she had desired nothing more, but had fallen asleep to wake up again in a better world. Caroline had sat

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'Maria and Hans wept for their mother.'

behind the curtain; deceived by the quietness of the sick lady she had left the room for a short time, when she returned Frau Werner was dead.

The children did not see their mother again. Caroline feared such an outburst of grief from Maria, that she thought it would be best to remove

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'They followed the course of the clouds with their eyes.'

the children. She took them next morning to a neighbouring village, where she left them with a farmer's wife, promising to fetch them back in the evening. Maria indeed asked for her mother, while Hans was contented with the nice fruit which was given him. When the children

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returned home in the evening, Caroline told them that their mother was in heaven. Maria hastened to the sick chamber, where she had been accustomed to find the dear pale figure lying in bed. But to-day the bed was empty. She ran through the whole house weeping, and cried after her mother, imploring to be taken to her; but in her greatest sorrow she held little Hans tightly by the hand; he, poor child, did not know what was the matter, and only cried because he saw his sister cry, and then earnestly tried to comfort her with the words which he had heard Caroline say,—'Mother is in heaven.'

Frau Werner had been living for the last six months in the cottage outside the village where we found her. She looked so delicate and sickly; she wished to gain strength by residing during the summer in that sheltered valley from which her husband, who had gone on a long journey, would come and fetch her. This she told the girl whom she had engaged as a servant. When she had only been there a short time, she received a message to start at once for a distant town, where her husband was seriously ill. She gave her children into the care of this servant, and hastened to the place where her husband lay sick, among strangers, and nursed him with self-denying love, but after a few weeks she had to lay the father of her children in the grave. Much worse in health than before, she returned to Schönthal; she had no relations, except a cousin who was married in far-away England; when Frau Werner now felt her death approaching nearer and nearer, she wrote to this cousin, as her last dying request, delivering her children into her care. Day after day she expected that she, or at least a letter from her, would arrive,—but neither one nor the other came. Still the sick woman hoped on, she did not think her death so near; but the Lord came and took the poor sufferer into His beautiful home in heaven.

After the funeral, a farmer's wife was found who was willing to take the children to her house; she knew that the cousin from England was expected, so she hoped to be well paid; for alas! it was not love which moved her to invite the children to her home, but only the hope of being well paid for it. They could not stay at their former lodgings, as they were let to some one else from the 1st of October; the most part of the furniture, too, belonged to the mistress; all the money that was left went to pay for the funeral expenses: thus the children were entirely dependent on the kindness of others. No one in the village knew whence they had come, no one knew their cousin's address; but all thought that she would soon come herself to fetch them.

Poor Maria was soon much altered; the child had formerly been constantly with her mother, and now seemed to waste away in longing for her. The woman with whom they lived every day became more unkind and harsh towards them. At first she had thought she would be well rewarded, now she feared that she should be obliged to keep the children always, and for nothing.

How different everything was now from what it used to be! Formerly the children were taken out of bed and dressed by kind hands, now they remained lying in the cold room: when Hans began to cry for milk, Maria got up, dressed herself, and with her stiff half-frozen fingers tried to dress Hans too. Then both the children skulked into the kitchen, and were happy if a servant girl gave them a little warm porridge. If the farmer's wife saw them, she would scold them because they had not got up earlier, and if they were there earlier she would scold them too, because they were so early in her way, and ought to have slept longer. The children seldom heard a kind word; they sat many long hours side-by-side in the room, for it was too cold now to play out-of-doors; they had no warm clothes, and the farmer's wife would not get them any, because she did not know if she would be paid for them.

'Oh, mother! why have you left us with this wicked woman, why have you not taken us with you to heaven?' Thus Maria often wept and lamented, and when Hans saw his sister weep he would join in, crying aloud. Maria used to stand for hours at the window looking up to the sky. The clouds often hung down so low, that she thought it could not be far off where her dear mother lived now; often losing herself in thoughts far beyond her years.

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One day Maria took Hans by the hand, and went with him to a hill which was close by the house. There Maria gazed at the clouds, which hurried so rapidly onwards; these clouds, which now looked so near, and now so far off, they were close to the heaven where her mother was; they could see the clouds, oh, why not their mother too? They followed the course of the clouds with their eyes; then, behind those trees, there the heaven was so low down, it quite touched the trees; yes, she thought, there the world must certainly have an end, and the heaven begin.

One of the farmer's men passed by the children.

'Christian,' said Maria eagerly to him, 'tell me, down yonder, close to those trees, is not the heaven very low there, and can one not climb up to it?'

Christian opened his eyes in wonder.

'Well, miss, go over and try, perhaps it may be so.'

(*To be continued.*)

THE NEW ALMANACK.

EVERY child knows what an Almanack is, though the name is one of those foreign words that has made itself so much at home among us, that it is not till we look into the dictionary that we find out that Al-manack is a relation of Al-hambra, Al-laddin, Al-geria, and even Al-raschid of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

But then, after all, '*Al*' in Arabic only means 'the,' and '*manack*' means 'moons' or 'months;' and an Almanack is just a small book or sheet, giving the days, weeks, and months of a year; often, too, Almanacks give the times of the rising of the sun, the changes of the moon, the hours of high tide, the days of Church festivals, and many other pieces of information which are useful to fathers and mothers, though boys and girls do not know much about them.

Our English Almanacks are all printed on paper, but there are nations that have carved theirs on wood, on the handles of axes, and especially on walking-sticks! These odd wooden Almanacks are often to be seen preserved in museums as curiosities. Many of our English Almanacks are printed on large sheets of paper, for pasting on the wall, or for framing; and some of them have pretty pictures on them, often of the church of the parish or of some well-known place.

When the New Year comes there comes a new Almanack. The old one is no use, it would lead any one who trusted it into mistakes; so it has to be taken down, as you see the father has done in our picture: he has handed over the Almanack for 1869 to the children, who are busy cutting out of it the only part that is of any use now, namely, the picture. While the father is flattening the new sheet for 1870 on the wall, his wife is waiting with the brush and the paste that he may fix it in its place.

Now, is there any lesson that we should learn from seeing the old Almanack being cut up and a new one taking its place? Yes, surely there is this one; that though we may throw away the sheet on which are marked the 365 days of 1869, yet that all those days have left their record in the Book of God, and that we shall have to meet them again in the Last Day, when we are to be rewarded or punished according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or bad. Wherefore we ought all to pray, and try that we may so spend each day that our old Almanacks may not rise up to accuse and condemn us in that solemn time, when 'God requireth that which is past' (Eccles. iii. 15), as He has said in His Holy Word that He will do.

SCENES IN LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID ESCAPES SAUL'S FURY.

LAST year, in our 'Scenes from the Early Life of David,' we saw him as the active shepherd lad of Bethlehem, as the skilful musician whose harp had soothed King Saul at his court in Gibeah, as the brave young warrior who slew Goliath, the giant foe of Israel, and as the chosen friend of the king's son Jonathan. We saw how he was hated by the envious Saul, and how he was loved and

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The New Almanack. [P. 7.

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David telling his Sorrows to Samuel.

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honoured by every one else with whom he had anything to do. We saw, too, that he was very wise and prudent, and that the secret of his success lay in his firm faith in God, Whose anointed he was, and Who purposed in time to raise him to the throne in place of Saul. This year our 'Scenes' will show us David as still a young man, but a wanderer, persecuted and chased by Saul from place to place, yet brought safely through all, to reign at length over the land of Israel.

In Gibeah, David had two friends of great influence to protect him, and both were the children of Saul. One was the noble prince Jonathan, and the other was the princess Michal. Saul had treacherously broken his promise, that the man who killed Goliath should marry the king's daughter, and he had given the princess Merab to be the wife of another man. But after David had done other brave deeds he was allowed to marry Saul's second daughter, Michal, and to live in a house of his own at Gibeah. Jonathan hoped that his friend was no longer in danger of being slain, as Saul had sworn to Jonathan, saying, *As the Lord liveth he shall not be slain.* (1 Sam. xix. 6.) But it was a vain hope, for the king shortly afterwards threw his javelin a second time at David, under circumstances that were much like the 'scene' of which we had a picture in *The Prize* last month. *And David fled and escaped that night* to his house, where he hoped to be safe from Saul's fury. But messengers from the court were *sent unto David's house to watch him, and to slay him in the morning;* and it was only by a cunning device of his wife that he was able to escape before daylight, and to seek a safer hiding-place.

He decided so wisely where to go, that we are sure the Holy Spirit guided and directed his choice, which was to take shelter with the prophet Samuel, by whom he had been anointed in his boyhood. The aged man had long ceased to take any share in governing the country, but was still occupied in his duties as a prophet at Ramah. There were several cities of that name in the Holy Land, but from early times it has been said that Samuel's abode was on the loftiest hill in the South of Palestine, about four miles from Jerusalem. On this account the hill is called Neby Samwil, a name which means *the prophet Samuel.* Travellers tell us that it is the most striking object in that part of the land, and a very fit place for the home of one whose advice was sought by men from all parts of the kingdom.

But whatever place may be meant by Ramah, the Bible tells us that *David fled and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt* (or lodged) *in Naioth,* which must have been some part of the city of Ramah, perhaps a quiet spot just outside, in what we should call the suburbs.

Now there lived at Naioth a company of young men, who were being prepared by Samuel to become prophets of the Lord—messengers of God, and teachers of His people. In this school, or college of the prophets, they spent much time in prayer and in the study of the law of Moses, listening to the instruction which the holy Samuel was so well able to give them. But they were also instructed in sacred music and composing psalms of praise, such as had, for instance, been composed and sung by Deborah and Barak after the victory over the Canaanites. (Judges, v.)

How thankfully David must have taken refuge with Samuel in this quiet, sacred home, so different a place from the court and camp at Gibeah! How gladly he must have joined the young men in their songs of praise and thanksgiving! And how great a relief he must have found it to tell the tale of his troubles to so kind and good a friend as Samuel, and to hear from his lips words of comfort and advice! No doubt, Samuel counselled him to keep out of Saul's way, and to wait patiently for the coming of God's appointed time. No doubt, too, he warned him that he must do Saul no harm, but must leave him in the hands of God, Whose anointed one the king still was, notwithstanding his miserable wilfulness and hardness of heart.

This visit to the school of the prophets was a good opportunity for David to improve his natural talent for music and psalmody, and we can imagine how useful

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instruction in these matters proved to him who, in after years, was to be known to his subjects as *the sweet psalmist of Israel.* (2 Sam. xxiii. 1.) Perhaps there were moments at Naioth when David felt that if it had been God's will he would gladly have given up all hope of being king, in order to spend his whole life in such holy, peaceful occupations as those in which he was now taking part. But God had other work for him to do, and Naioth was not long to be his place of refuge. *Soon it was told Saul saying, David is at Naioth in Ramah.* (1 Sam. xix. 19.) *And Saul sent messengers to take David.* But as soon as the men came to the prophets' dwelling and saw them engaged in their sacred duties, directed, as usual, by their venerable leader Samuel, the spirit of God came upon them, *and they also prophesied;* by which we are probably to understand that the Holy Spirit caused them to join in the prophets' song of praise, and so to lose all power of injuring David, whom they had come to seize. This occurred to three sets of messengers, who came one after the other, and at last Saul determined to go himself and secure David. But even before he arrived at the house where the prophets lived *the Spirit of God came upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah.* Surely this ought to have convinced him that in persecuting David he was fighting against the Most High God.

When he entered Samuel's presence and saw the company of the prophets, he cast off his weapons and such outer robes as marked his rank, so that he appeared no longer as a king or a warrior, but dressed in a close inner garment, and therefore looking a plain man like themselves. Then he *prophesied before Samuel in like manner*, taking his part in the chorus of praise, until at length he lay down exhausted in a sort of trance, which lasted all that day and all night, until the morning. Before Saul came to himself, David had fled from the house, and was hiding again at Gibeah.

Thus did Almighty God miraculously turn aside Saul and his messengers from their cruel purpose, proving how entirely He has the hearts of all men in His power, and how He moves and guides them at His will. Nebuchadnezzar said, after God had given him back his reason and his throne, *He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?* (Dan. iv. 35.) And so lovingly does He exercise this power for the protection of His faithful people that they can say, as David might have said when he saw this marvel worked for his deliverance, *O how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!* (Ps. xxxi. 19.)

'O Father, Whose most righteous will
All things in heaven and earth fulfil,
Thy watchful love true good provides,
For him whose heart Thy Spirit guides;
And hurtful things no more can be
To him whose life is hid in Thee.'

THE BLUE SKY.

'YOUR mother wants you to come down to the parlour and play the lady a tune,' said Bridget, bolting into the nursery where all the children were sitting: 'you, Miss Jane and Emily, come.'

The girls jumped up. 'Something that we can play and sing together, I suppose,' said Emily.

'I 'll play the last one I learned, because *I* can play that *best*,' cried Jane.

'O no,' said Emily, 'I cannot sing that at all; you must play something that I can sing well;' and while they were putting away their sewing and smoothing down their hair, there seemed to be some contention, for each wanted to have her own way; and that is the secret of the difficulties between brothers and sisters—every one wants to do as he pleases. Jane and Emily were called very lovely children, and could they be really coming to an open disagreement like this? Let us see.

When they were ready to go downstairs, and on their way to the door, Jane threw her arm round Emily's waist and said, 'Well, Emily, I will play what you sing

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best;' and Emily answered, 'No, Jane, play what you like, and I'll try to sing as well as I can.' This was, indeed, lovely; each giving up so sweetly. A yielding and obliging temper has been prettily called *the blue sky* of the soul. It makes blue sky in the home also, for it scatters clouds in the family horizon, and lets no rude and angry storm rage in the family atmosphere. It makes that 'soft answer' which 'turneth away wrath,' and utters that kind word which is 'better than honey or the honeycomb.' Are you cultivating an obliging temper?—*Child's Paper.*

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'Winter.'

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WINTER.

THE mill-wheel's frozen in the stream;
The Church is decked with holly;
Mistletoe hangs from the kitchen beam,
To fright away melancholy;
Icicles clink in the milk-maid's pail;
Youngsters skate in the pool below;
Blackbirds perch on the garden rail;
And hark! how the cold winds blow!

There goes the squire to shoot at snipe,
Here runs Dick to fetch a log;
You'd say his breath was the smoke of a pipe
In the frosty morning fog,
Hodge is breaking the ice for the kine;
Old and young cough as they go;
The round, red sun forgets to shine,
And hark! how the cold winds blow!

JAMES SMITH.

THE THREE SILVER TROUT.

A FABLE.

ONCE upon a time, in a clear river at the foot of a hill, there lived three pretty little silver trout. Now a good fairy had the charge of everything in this river, and was very kind to these little trout, and gave them everything that was fit for them to have. But two of them grew discontented and unhappy, and were always wishing for something they had not got, and so they could take no pleasure in anything which they had.

Now this was naughty of these two little fish; for the fairy was very kind to them, and never grudged them anything that was for their good: but, instead of thanking her for all her kindness to them, they were always blaming her in their own minds for not giving them everything they were foolish enough to wish for.

At last the fairy, who knew what they thought, was angry with them, and she determined to punish their discontent by granting their wishes, and making the folly of these two little trout an example to all the foolish fish in the world.

So one day she called the three silver trout to her, and told them they should have whatever they wished for.

Now the eldest was a very proud little fish, and wanted to be greater than all the other fishes. 'I do not like,' he said to the fairy, 'my life here at all. You have put me in a narrow river, where I am kept in on each side, and cannot go where I like. I am not so blind but that I can see how kind you can be to others. There are your favourite little birds, that can fly wherever they please, and have everything at their command, because you have given them wings. Give me such wings as you have given them, and then I shall really have something to thank you for.'

No sooner had he said the words than he felt the wings he had asked for growing at his side, and in a minute he spread them abroad, and rose out of the water. At first he felt a wonderful pleasure in being able to fly. He mounted high in the air, and looked down with scorn upon all the fishes in the world.

He then resolved to travel and see foreign countries. He flew over rivers and mountains, till, at last, growing faint with hunger and thirst, his strength began to fail him, and he thought it best to come down and refresh himself.

But the foolish little thing had not noticed that he was now in a strange country, and many a mile from the river where he was born; and when he came down he happened to alight among dry sands and rocks, where there was not a drop of water to drink: and there he lay, faint and tired, and unable to rise, gasping and fluttering, till at last he died in great misery.

Now the second silver trout, though he was not so proud as the first, was very selfish; and, provided he was safe and comfortable himself, had no care for others.

So when the fairy asked him what he would like, he said, 'I do not care for wings to fly to strange places, where I don't know what may become of me. I was quite happy and contented, until one day I saw a great rope in the water, and it fastened itself, I don't know how, about the gills of a little fish that was near me, and he was carried away, out of my sight; so I thought in my own mind, that this misfortune might some day happen to me, and I have been very unhappy and discontented ever since. Now all I ask is, that you will tell me the meaning of this, and of all the other dangers which beset poor

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little fishes; then I shall have sense to take care of my own safety, and I am very well able to provide for my own living.'

The good fairy then opened the understanding of the little trout, and he knew the meaning of snares, nets, hooks, and lines, and all the dangers to which he could be liable.

At first he was very pleased with his knowledge, and said to himself, 'Now, surely, I shall be happy, for I understand every danger that can come near me; and I am sure I love myself too well not to take care of my own safety.'

From this time forward he took care not to go into any deep holes, for fear that a large fish might be there and swallow him up. He also kept away from the shallow places, in case the sun should dry them up, and not leave him water enough to swim in. When he saw the shadow of a cloud moving upon the river, 'Ah!' he said to himself, 'here are the fishermen with their nets;' then he would take refuge under a bank, and stay there trembling until the cloud was past. Then again, when he saw a fly skimming on the water, or a worm coming down the stream, he did not dare to bite, however hungry he might be. 'No, no,' he would say, 'my good friends, I am not so foolish as that: you must go to those who know no better, to those silly and ignorant trout who are not upon their guard, and who do not know that you may be the bait to some hook that lies hidden for their destruction.'

So this over-careful trout kept himself in continual alarm, and could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, in peace. He grew daily thinner and thinner, and sadder and sadder; till, wasted almost to nothing with care and anxiety, he died at last from very fear of dying, which is the most miserable of deaths.

Now when the fairy asked the youngest silver trout what he wished for, he said, 'I know I am only a very foolish little fish, and do not know what is good for me, or what is bad for me; and I really wonder how I came to be worth bringing into the world, or what you can see in me to take so much trouble about me. But if I must wish for something, it is that you should do with me whatever you think best, and that I should be contented to live or die just as you would wish me to.'

Now the fairy was very pleased with the humble request of this good little trout, and she felt that she must take great care of the little creature who had trusted himself so wholly to her love; so she went wherever he went, and was always with him, and was to him a protector, and friend, and companion; and she put contentment into his mind and joy into his heart; and so the little trout slept always in peace, and awoke in gladness; and whatever happened to him, he was still pleased and thankful; in short he was the happiest little fish that ever swam in any water C. C.

DO YOU TELL YOUR MOTHER?

A PARTY of schoolgirls were whispering together in one corner of the schoolroom, and as another of their number came in they exclaimed, Oh, Jane, do come here! We have a secret to tell you; but you must promise not to tell it to anybody for the world.'

'Well,' said Jane, 'Then I cannot hear it, for I never listen to anything that I cannot tell my mother.'

What a noble girl! and how much happier she must be than those who hide things they would blush to have known.

Girls, how many of you do as Jane did?

I heard of a good man once, who said, 'I never did anything that I was ashamed to tell my mother.' It is a great thing to be able to say that, and I am afraid there are very few boys now-a-days who can say it. Can you, my young reader? If you cannot, will you not make up your mind so to live after this that you can say it, if you are so happy as to have a mother still living?

Tell your mother everything, children; never do or say anything that you would be ashamed to have her know.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. II.] FEBRUARY, 1870. [One Penny.

'They stood before a small house.' P. 19.

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TWO CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

(*Continued from page 7.*)

HANS cried more and more bitterly with the cold. This at last roused Maria from her dreams. 'Come, my Hans, come, we will go home,' and she hastily returned with him.

To-day it troubled Maria very little that everything looked gloomy and disagreeable; she was glad that the cross woman sent them at once to bed; now she could think on, about how low down the heaven was, close to those trees, and how surely she would be able to climb up there to her mother.

'Hans, do you never think any more of mother now?' she asked her little brother.

'Oh, yes,' he replied; 'always at night, when I am asleep.'

It became colder and colder out of doors, colder and colder in the house. The more the hope of any tidings from the cousin in England vanished from the mind of the farmer's wife, the more unkind she became to the children, and as the danger increased that she would be obliged to keep them entirely, the more harshly did she treat them.

Time passed away. Christmas eve was at hand. Maria had only a faint recollection of former Christmas eves. On the last her father had already gone on his journey, her mother had looked very sad; a little tree had indeed been lighted, but this Christmas festival did not shine down like a star of joy upon Maria's soul. But to-day the whole village was busily and happily employed; here the last touch was being put to the bright festive decorations of the rooms, there the smoking cakes were being fetched from the bakehouse; here a farmer's wife came back heavily laden with treasures of every kind from the neighbouring town, and where a couple of children chatted together the important question was certainly being discussed, 'What will the holy Christ-child bring us?' And when Maria saw all this happy life and bustle around her, then she felt very strange and sad at heart. Nobody troubled themselves about her or Hans. No cheerful Christmas preparations were made in their house; the farmer's wife had no children, and she was even more cross to-day as she bustled about the house, for she was a miser, and grudged every penny which to-day she had to give to the farm-servants and maids. She had put off the house-cleaning till to-day, so Hans and Maria were driven from one corner to another. Added to this, the cakes of the farmer's wife had not been well baked; she ought to have looked at them herself: but she was not accustomed ever to take the blame to herself—no, she became more and more out of temper, and kept wishing 'that there was no such thing as Christmas.'

'What will the holy Christ-child bring you?' inquired the post-woman, who now entered the house, of little Hans.

He asked Maria, but she could not give him any information; the children did not yet understand how to ask the Christ-child themselves; they had learned, indeed, little prayers from their mother, but that they really had a Saviour, Who called them by their names, Who watched over them day and night, Who loved them, and heard each petition they made—of all this, the children, alas! knew nothing.

'What will the Christ-child bring me?' asked Hans of the farmer's wife.

'What will He bring you? A good, hard stick, you good-for-nothing boy. What, am I to be bothered with strange children, give them to eat and to drink, and now they have the impudence to ask me for a Christmas-box? Go off, then, to your grand cousin, she will give you something. I wish I had never seen your faces. If you don't be quick and leave my house, I will drive you out with a stick.'

The farmer's wife banged the door after her, and left the room. The children were alone, and Hans looked up terrified to his sister. Anger and pride were written on her face. 'Come, Hans,' she said, 'we will go away, she will beat us if we don't!'

'Yes, come!' answered the little fellow.

'We will go to our mother,' continued Maria.

'We will go to our mother,' echoed Hans.

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'You must run very fast, Hans,' said Maria. 'Our mother is in heaven, but I think I can find it. Can you go as far as the forest up yonder?' and she drew him to the window; 'there heaven is so low down we can climb up to it, and then we shall be with our mother. I cannot bear to stay here any longer.'

'I can run very fast,' Hans answered.

'Come, then, we will tie our handkerchiefs round us, and then go out at the back, through the garden, so that nobody may see us; come along, Hans, so that we may get there before it is dark.' And the two children hastened to their room. Here Maria wrapped up her brother as well as she could, tied a handkerchief round her own head, and now the children slipped out of the back-door and ran across the field towards the wood, which they clearly saw in the distance.

At first all went on well, and the joy of having escaped the cruel woman overcame all other feelings. Merrily as children do, they ran a good piece of the way, and were glad that nobody saw them who might have forced them to return. But then Hans began to complain of hunger; Maria was glad that she had provided for this, and taken two apples with her. Now they had reached the high road. 'Look, Hans, run, and you shall have an apple,' and she threw it some way on, and when he had picked it up she threw it again, and then allowed the little man to eat it. Thus they had really gone a good distance forward, but now they began to freeze with the cold. Hans stood still, and declared, crying, that he could not run any more. Maria dried up his tears. 'Don't cry, Hans, we shall soon be in heaven now;' and she looked around her to see if the wood was not near. Yes, indeed, it was nearer, but it looked much blacker than before; of the heaven there was very little to be seen, it rose above them as high as ever, but the early night was coming down apace.

Maria saw that the high road now made a bend, a narrow cross-road led more directly to the wood, and this she quickly chose, leading Hans, comforting him, and telling him how soon they would now be in heaven, and how happy they would be there; thus the children still went onward. But darker and darker grew the evening, and Hans wept with hunger, fatigue, and cold. Maria, too, could scarcely go on any further, but she dared not say so; she must encourage Hans cheerfully. 'No, Hans, you must not sit down or it will be quite dark before we get there. No, Hans, be a good boy, and I will tell mother how good you have been!'

But even Maria's courage gave way, when it now became quite dark, and they could no longer see any trace either of the wood or the heaven. From all sides the merry bells from the neighbouring villages came sounding down to them; they were calling people to the Christmas-eve services, and in the churches they were singing of the Christ-child, the Saviour of mankind: but the two poor children, wet in the fields, heard and knew nothing about it; they thought that the heaven was open for them; but Him! they knew not Him Who had opened it. But He knew them, He had called them by their names, they were His, and the faithful Jesus wished to guide the poor little wanderers to heaven, but by a different way from that which they had taken.

Weeping, weary, freezing, they stood there; a slight feeling of repentance now came over Maria,—would it not have been better if they had stayed with the cruel woman? Then at least they would have had a roof to shelter them; here—Maria looked round—not even a star was visible to-night in the cloud-covered heavens. But there, there, a little distance off, shone a light, ever brighter, ever brighter it sparkled—it appeared to be beckoning to the children—all around was dark, but there the bright light streamed forth with cheerful rays.

'Oh, Hans, look, look! there is a light; we will run quickly to it, it is so near; oh, Hans, if I could only carry you!'

Maria stood close to her brother; she wiped away the tears from his eyes, and, pointing to the house, drew him onwards. Hans saw the light too, and struggled on. Fortunately it was not far off, and soon they stood before a small house, from whose windows the bright light streamed forth. Maria now stood timidly hesitating before the door, then a dog which lay chained

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close by began to bark. Hans screamed aloud, and immediately the house-door was opened. At the same moment a lady opened the door of one of the rooms, and asked, 'Who is there?'

(*To be continued.*)

THE FRETFUL CHILD.

DEAR, unhappy, fretful child,
Come and let us talk awhile;
Tears your face have sadly spoiled,
And I cannot see a smile.

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Brows are frowning, eyes are sad,
  Lips are sullen, words are sour;—
Ah! my darling, this is bad,
  Thus to mar the fleeting hour.

God hath given you every good—
  Home, kind friends, who love you well,
Light and clothing, health and food—
  Blessings more than I can tell.

Oh! it is an evil thing
  For youth, upon its happy way,
Thankless to be murmuring,
  When it should be glad and gay.

MARY BENNETT.

THE FIRST VALENTINE.

THE little girl so attentively looking at the paper before her is named Mary Catt, but all her friends call her 'Little Pussy.' This day is rather important to her, for she has had a letter by post directed to her, for the first time. It is February 14th, and she has been waiting most eagerly for the 'rat-tat' of the postman's knock.

'Why is he so very late this morning?' she kept constantly saying, as minute after minute passed away. But at last the welcome sound was heard, and the poor doll was dropped upon the floor, and lay as stiff beside the ball as if she had been shot, and

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that was the cannon-ball that shot her. The envelope was opened in a moment, 'Pussy' was on the floor, and everything in the world was forgotten but the important paper which was her first valentine.

I dare say you wish to know what was printed, or painted, or written on that large sheet of paper that our little friend holds in her hand. The writing at the bottom of the picture was this,—'I love you so much, I could eat you.' This was what our little friend often said to those who were kind to her.

But now for the picture itself. It was a beautiful sleek kitten sitting on the hearth-rug beside the fire, whilst a poor little half-starved mouse was just beginning to creep out of a hole to make its way towards a small crumb of bread under the table.

The poor little mouse loved the crumb so much that he could eat it, but he was afraid to get it, because the kitten looked at him. And the kitten loved the mouse so much, that she could have eaten him; but she was so fat and well fed that she did not care to move from the warm place by the fire to take the trouble to catch the mouse.

This was the meaning that 'Pussy's' loving mother gave to the valentine. I dare say it was quite true. But the little girl said it was 'much too bad' to tease her so. Her father said he thought that the kitten meant a little girl that had all the good things in food and clothing, and the mouse meant a poor half-starved little beggar craving a morsel of food the rich child would not touch.

'But then,' said 'Pussy,' 'the rich child did not want to eat the poor child.'

I will now leave it to you to see what you can make of it. W. M.

THE ROBIN REDBREASTS.

A FABLE.

TWO Robin Redbreasts built their nests
Within a hollow tree;
The hen sat quietly at home,
The cock sang merrily;
And all the little Robins said,
'Wee, wee, wee, wee, wee, wee.'

One day—the sun was warm and bright,
And shining in the sky—
Cock Robin said, 'My little dears,
'T is time you learned to fly;'
And all the little young ones said,
'I'll try, I'll try, I'll try.'

I know a child, and who she is
I'll tell you by-and-bye,
When mother says, 'Do this,' or 'that,'
She says, 'What for?' and 'Why?'
She'd be a better child, by far,
If she would say, 'I'll try.'

SCENES IN LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

WHEN David fled from his quiet refuge in Naioth of Ramah he returned to Gibeah, to see his beloved Jonathan once more before setting out on the wanderings that were to be his lot during the remainder of Saul's life. From parts of 1 Sam. xx. it would seem that Saul, after returning from Ramah, expected David to take his former place at the court. But, fearing that Saul's hatred was lasting, David did not think that the king's heart was really changed towards him, so when he secretly met Jonathan he said, *What have I done? What is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?*

Like the good son that he was, Jonathan could not believe that Saul, after swearing to spare David's life, still meant to take it; but he thought that his fierce attempts were caused by fits of passion, which would pass away, and leave him friendly towards David. Jonathan also thought that he should have known if Saul had any such dreadful intention. To avoid giving his friend needless pain, David kindly said, *Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes: and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved* (1 Sam. xx. 3); and then to show how very real and near his danger was he added, *But truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.*

Jonathan generously offered to help David in any way he might wish, saying,

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Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.

Now this was the plan they laid. Putting off his flight for the time, David was to visit his family at Bethlehem and remain there three days. The next day after that on which they were now talking together would be the feast of the new moon, when the king would have the chief officers of court at his table. Among these he would expect to see David, because the young man was his son-in-law, and held a high rank in the army; but David's place would be empty. If Jonathan were asked the cause of David's absence, he was to say that he had given him leave to attend the feast held by his own family at Bethlehem, and from the king's manner of receiving the explanation Jonathan was to judge whether or not Saul meant to put David to death. If the excuse were accepted they would know that he was feeling more kindly towards David than he had lately done, but if he were made angry by it they would be sure that he only regretted David's absence because it was one more chance lost for carrying out his wicked design. On the third day David was to return to his place of concealment near a rock called Ezel, and, at the same time, Jonathan was to go into the field close by to practise shooting with his bow and arrows, with only a boy for his attendant. He was then to shoot three arrows as if he were aiming at a mark, and David was to listen to the command that Jonathan would give the boy about picking them up. If he said to the lad, *Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee*, David was to know that Saul did not mean to harm him and he was therefore to come out of his hiding-place, but if Jonathan said, *Behold, the arrows are beyond thee*, David was to escape and to know that the Lord was sending him away from Saul. This precaution was to be taken about speaking to the lad, and not to David, lest any one should be watching Jonathan, or lest from any other cause he might not be able to speak to David in the field.

When the next day came, and David was missed from his place at the feast, Jonathan's excuse threw Saul into a great fury, during which he used most insulting words to his son, taunted him with his friendship for David, declared that Jonathan could never succeed to the throne so long as David lived, and ended by ordering him to fetch his friend that he might be put to death.

Jonathan tried to reason with his father by asking, *Wherefore shall he be slain? What hath he done?* but Saul hurled at him the javelin which he had twice thrown at David, *whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.*

More grieved, no doubt, for his friend than for himself, even the meek Jonathan was roused by this violence, and left the table in *fierce anger*, without touching the food that was set before him; *for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.*

At the appointed time Jonathan went to the field accompanied by the little lad. *And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran he shot an arrow beyond him*, so as to pass over his head, and as the lad went towards the arrow Jonathan cried after him, *Is not the arrow beyond thee?* and then, as a further hint to David in his concealment, he cried, *Make speed, haste, stay not!* The lad *gathered up the arrows and came to his master*, but knew not that any thing important was meant by this, for *only Jonathan and David knew the matter.*

How breathlessly David must have listened behind the rock! Sorry as he must have been to fly from Gibeah, he could feel but little surprise to find that, as Jonathan had beautifully said, the Lord was sending him away.

Well might they so carefully settle what signal to use; for after Saul's attempt upon his son's life he would have been enraged if he had discovered that Jonathan was again holding communication with David, and might even have slain his own son. When men are given up by God to the power of Satan and to their own evil passions we cannot tell from one minute to another into what wickedness they may fall: nor can any act be deemed too vile or too savage for them to commit. Let us, then, fear *to give place to the devil* in even the smallest degree. (Eph. iv. 27.)

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Jonathan shooting the Arrows.

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Poor Jay Jones.

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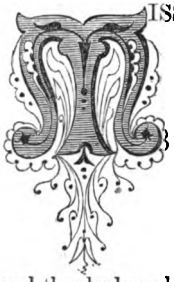
POOR JAY JONES.



'MISS TAYLOR, see what a grand bargain I have made to-day!' said Allen Blair, a fine boy of nine, to the governess of the little day-school to which he went, as he ran to meet her after the dinner-hour, 'Jay Jones gave me this beautiful toy for an apple. An apple—only think! and thanked me besides.'

Miss Taylor looked rather sorrowfully, first at Allen, then at the poor little cripple, Jay Jones, who, with pale, sallow face, and hunchback, stood leaning on his crutches, with his eyes fixed imploringly upon the teacher, as if he would beg for the kind words which his more nimble companions had rushed forward to obtain.

'Allen,' said she, reproachfully, 'I am sorry you took anything for an apple from poor Jay. Come into the school-room, children, and I will tell you about him.'

Eager for the story, they were soon in their places, and Miss Taylor began:—

'Jay Jones has no father or mother to take care of him. In infancy he was abused and neglected. Now he is obliged to go on crutches, and is pale and ill. How easy it is for you, who are well, and have plenty of good food, to do without an apple! But the kind woman who takes care of little Jay has no orchard, and she cannot afford to buy apples for him. He is often sick and faint, and cannot eat his meals. How delicious, then, to him appeared the ripe apple! so tempting that he gave for it the toy that had been kindly given him by a pitying friend to cheer his lonely hours, when he is too ill to come to school.'

'Miss Taylor,' said Allen, 'I 'll tell you what I 'll do: I 'll bring Jay every ripe apple I can find in our orchard to-morrow. I know mother 'll let me—and I 'll give back the toy. Here, Jay, I 'm sorry I took it, but I didn't think.'

'I 'll bring him some too,' said another voice. 'And I'—'And I,' said many more.

'That 's right,' replied Miss Taylor; 'be kind to little Jay.'

The next day, Miss Taylor's desk was covered with apples for little Jay, and through the long summer he had all the fruit he wished, and many other presents, until he began to think his schoolmates were like dear little brothers and sisters. But he grew weaker and weaker, until he could no longer leave his bed. And carefully nursed by pitying neighbours, little Jay died.

And when autumn strewed the ground with its withering leaves, a group of boys, followed by little girls with hands full of flowers, and the beloved teacher, and the kind villagers, gathered around an open grave in the churchyard. The farewell hymn floated on the air, the autumn flowers almost covered the coffin, and with slow steps and saddened hearts the procession moved away, and left Jay Jones in his silent grave, though his spirit had gone to a brighter world.

Are those boys sorry that they have sweetened with kindness the cup of suffering which that poor lonely boy was compelled to drink? Are they less happy in their own games and merry sports?

I think not.

THE DYING ONE.

I AM so tired, mother; let me rest
A deep, long sleep, my mother, on thy breast.
I am so tired; oh, that I could sleep
Just one long slumber, oh, so deep—so deep!

I am so tired, but I get no rest;
There is none for me, even on thy breast.
I could bear all, if I could only sleep
Just one long slumber, oh, so deep—so deep!

THE MOTHER.

'Rest, oh, my darling! is prepared for thee:
A better rest than thou couldst have with me;
The rest and peace thou hast desired so long,
Thy pain laid down, that is so strong—so strong.

Bear it, my darling, yet a little while,
By perfect patience win thy Saviour's smile;
Thy patience and thy pain, both doth thy Saviour know:
Think on His pains and patience—on His woe, His woe!'

J. E. C. F.

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

EXPLAINED IN VERY SIMPLE WORDS,

FOR THE USE OF A LITTLE CHILD.

'After *this manner*, therefore pray, ye.'—*Matt.* vi. 9.

'And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, *What mean ye* by this service?'—*Exod.* xii. 25.

Our Father	O Thou who art God, and my dear Father that made me,
Which art in heaven,	And who dwellest above in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.	Cause me to love and speak Thy great Name in earnest.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.	May every one in this great world soon love and pray to Thee, as all the bright angels do that live with Thee in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,	O give me every day my food to eat.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.	Forgive me all that I have done or said wrong, and teach me to forgive any who have done wrong to me.
And lead us not into temptation;	Let no one make me say or do a naughty thing.
But deliver us from evil:	Let no one harm me in any way, but do Thou take care of me in every danger.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.	For no one is so great and so good as Thou art: for Thou didst make the world and all that is in it.
Amen.	O Heavenly Father, listen to the prayer of a little child, for Jesu's sake.

A. W. I.

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LITTLE MARY AND THE CATECHISM.

THE labours of the school
Were ended for the day,
And out upon the village-green
The children turned to play.

One little maiden sat
Beside a cottage-door,
With book on lap, and brow on hand,
Intent to spell its lore.

Rather than play, she chose
Upon its page to dwell;
It was her Catechism-book,
That Mary loved so well.

Of Baptism it told,
In words for children meet;
And, more than all her tasks, she loved
Its answers to repeat.

Though mean her lot on earth,
It told to her was given
A birth-right to a fadeless crown,
Inheritor of heaven.

She loved to kneel and say
'Our Father,' unto God,
Although her earthly father lay
Beneath the churchyard sod.

Her widowed mother wore
A brow of anxious thought;
But Mary, with her own glad trust,
To cheer her fondly sought.

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To practise all she learn'd,
The little maiden strove;
And, as her Catechism taught,
To succour, honour, love.

In all a child might do
Her willing aid was lent;
And like a sunbeam was her smile
Of innocent content.

And now the floor was swept,
The babe in cradle laid,
And, hard at work, beside her child
The careful parent stayed.

The maiden was not missed
Until the infant woke;
But then, in loud and angry tone,
The toil-worn mother spoke,—

'Come, Mary, take the child,
And put your book away;
You go to school, and never think
How hard I work all day.'

'Oh! but I do, dear mother,'
The little girl replied;
And up she rose at once, and laid
Her treasured book aside.

And from her parent's brow
The fretful shadow passed,
For Mary's cheerful haste forbade
Her angry mood to last.

She took her baby brother,
And kiss'd his forehead fair,
And tended all his little wants
With fondest, gentlest care.

And blessed in her *deed*
Was that obedient child,
While on her, in approving joy,
God and good Angels smiled.

SCENES OF CHILDHOOD.

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CONQUERING SELF.

'OH! when I am a man,' cried Ernest Forbes, and his eyes sparkled, and his head was proudly lifted as he said it, 'When I am a man, I should like to have plenty of money, and to be great and powerful, with lots of people looking up to me whom I could rule over.'

'And as you will not be a man for a long time, could you not try, as a beginning, to rule yourself, Ernest?' asked his mother.

That was a new thought to Ernest. He ruled his younger brothers and sisters very imperiously; he *tried* to do so with his schoolmates, as far as they would allow it; but as for himself, that was something he had not yet got the mastery of, and yet he felt it was very desirable he should try for it. For Ernest was not the boy to deny his faults, even to himself. His love of power led him to be at times selfish and exacting, and he had a hasty temper which broke out in violent bursts of passion, in which he seemed to lose all self-control. And yet, despite these great faults, Ernest had a warm heart, and many good points in his character which made him beloved, even by those who grieved over what was wrong in him. No one was more sorry than Ernest himself was, after indulging in any of these outbreaks of temper; but, unfortunately, his regret was useless, because it always came too late, and the promises he made for the future were apt to be forgotten when anything occurred to irritate him.

'I will try to rule myself,' he thought, after his mother had spoken those few words to him, 'and I will begin from this time.'

The opportunity came soon enough for this beginning. That same evening Ernest sat down to prepare his lessons for the next day; things had gone smoothly with him at school and he was in a very good humour, and as during tea-time he had been very careful to avoid any cross words with the other children, he was well pleased with himself, and began to think that after all the mastery over his temper would be easily gained.

But after his lessons were prepared, there was a long French exercise to be written, and this was at all times a trying thing to Ernest, who disliked this study more than all the rest put together.

However, he set to work manfully, and was glad to find that the difficulties were not so impossible to get over as he had thought, because he really gave his mind to the work before him. At last he had finished, and he was gazing with much pleasure at the neatly-written exercise, when a stream of ink flowed all across the paper—his little sister Fanny had struck the inkstand with her ball and it was overturned, the contents flowing over Ernest's French exercise.

The little girl looked terrified at the mischief she had caused, and Ernest rushed towards her with uplifted hand. 'You little——!' but here I am glad to say he stopped, and though his face was red with anger, he turned away silently, and sat down despairingly to gaze on his ruined exercise.

'I am so sorry,' whispered Fanny, rubbing her curly head against his arm in hope of some notice being taken of her. Fanny had been so used to her elder brother's violence when she offended him, that she could not understand this strange quietness, and she was still more surprised when he told her never to mind, as he pushed her gently aside and set to work to write the exercise again. It was hard work to keep quiet, and to go patiently through the work he so much disliked; but Ernest did it, and as he put by books and papers and met his mother's approving look, he felt repaid for the struggle by the happy thought, that in this case he had battled with, and conquered himself.

It may seem but a trifling thing, but it is just these little annoyances which try the temper of grown persons and children so greatly, and which give us all such constant opportunities of subduing our impatience and annoyance. And these little conflicts with 'self,' will, by God's help, enable us to gain that mastery over our feelings and

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passions without which no life can become useful, happy, or great.

When Ernest Forbes left his mother that night, she whispered to him some words that were very encouraging then, and helped him in many a harder trial in time to come,—

'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.' (Prov. xvi. 32.)

BROTHER AND SISTER.

MY Willie has a charming way
In all he does throughout the day,
In happy work or pleasant play,
Of saying, 'Bessie too!'

If I call him down to come,
To do some reading or a sum,
To eat an orange or a plum,
He says, 'And Bessie too!'

If I say we'll take a walk,
Or pluck the currants from the stalk,
Or have a little twilight talk,
It's always, 'Bessie too!'

All his treats with her he shares,
He tells her all his little cares,
And all he asks for in his prayers,
He asks for Bessie too.

When I say, 'You have been good,
And done the very things you should,
And been as steady as you could,'—
He says, 'And Bessie too!'

One day he asked if 'old' he'd grown;
'Not very old,—four years alone.'
'Four?' said he in a questioning tone,
'Four years is Bessie too?'

Now 'rhubarb-medicine' Will can take
As if it were a sweet or cake,
Nor one wry face need ever make—
I can't say, 'Bessie too!'

One day, the nurse's steps to save,
To him mamma the message gave,
A dose of rhubarb he should have,
He added, 'Bessie too!'

But Bessie earnestly objected,—
And Willie's kindness she rejected,—
Ran to mother, quite dejected,
Sobbing out, 'Not Bessie too?'

Still, spite of accidents like this,
Which soon are righted by a kiss,
I think a charming way it is,
To say, 'And Bessie too!'

A SUCKING-PIG.

THE other day the children came home in high fever of delight at having seen the dearest little pig drinking out of a feeding-bottle, just like a baby. Of course I had to go and see it, for which purpose I was introduced to its owners, who lived in a cottage, the principal room of which was painted a bright blue.

A good-natured old woman was there, with her two little motherless grandchildren. The colour of the red tiles of the floor was enlivened by a grey and white cat; and a satiny-skinned little pig of about a month old, which was fed out of a feeding-bottle, was, for the moment, the hero of the place.

Piggy is as grateful for good treatment, and as capable of attachment, as the horse or the dog. That a pig is intelligent, is sufficiently shown by the way in which it can be taught tricks; performing pigs being among the attractions of country fairs. In London I have seen, in the poor neighbourhoods, little pigs follow their masters through noisy streets and into crowded public-houses, where they lay down at their masters' feet like a dog.

I am sure little readers of *The Prize* will be interested to hear that this piggy is the survivor of three who were taken away from their mother, because she was like the old woman that lived in a shoe, who had so many children she did not know what to do. They will be also glad to learn that piggy, who is very saucy and impudent, is not going to be killed just at present, but is going to be kept by its mistress, to whom it was given when only a day old.

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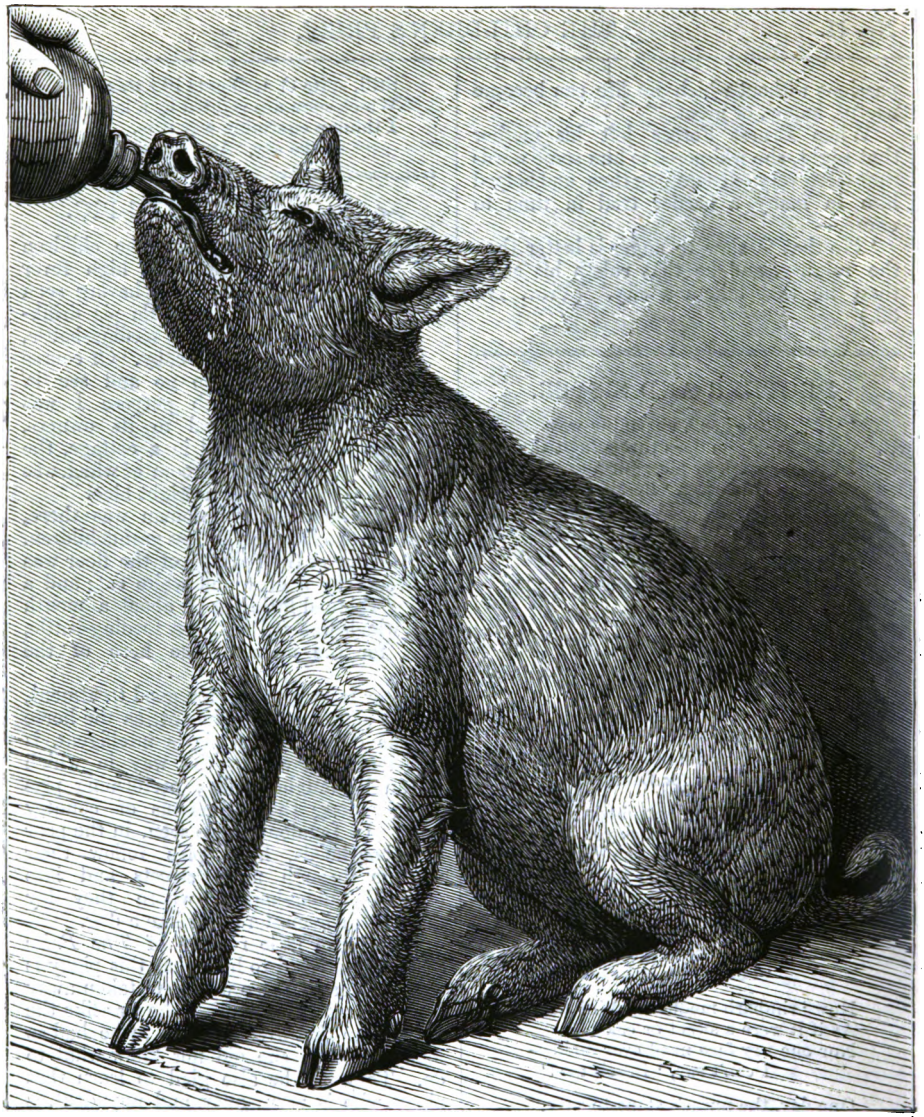

A Sucking Pig.

☞ **NOTICE.—With 'CHATTERBOX,' Part I. for January, 1870, is given a beautiful Coloured Picture, 'TOM'S SUPPER.'**

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. III.] MARCH, 1870. [One Penny.

The Faithful Black Boy.

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JOSEPH.

A TRUE STORY.

MADAGASCAR is an island a very long way off from our own country, and inhabited by black people who, until lately, had never heard anything of the peaceful and loving doctrine of the Gospel. In this island, a short while ago, a small incident happened, showing how goodness and kindness find their reward even in this world.

There lived among these black people of Madagascar a missionary who had come to show the people the way of the Gospel, and try to lead them to leave off their wild, savage habits and live like Christians. This missionary we will call Mr. Smith. One day Mr. Smith was walking in the cool of the evening when he heard a doleful wail proceeding seemingly from a tree a little way from the road-side, and he quickly stepped aside to see what was the matter. The cry came from a poor black boy who was tied to a tree; he was nearly naked, and the thick cord that bound him seemed to hurt him very much, for he was pitifully thin, and the bones stood out all over his poor wasted body, in many places his skin showed dark purple and red marks from the chafing of the cord. 'Poor boy,' said Mr. Smith, to him in his own language, 'why are you here in such a sorry state? what have you done wrong?'

'Nothing,' sobbed the boy, his big eyes twinkling at being so kindly spoken to: 'but I have been very ill, and master said I was no use; so he turned me out and bound me to this tree that I might die without troubling him; and, oh, I am so hungry, I shall trouble no one long;' and down lay the poor boy almost fainting on the root of the tree.

'Poor lad!' said Mr. Smith, soothingly, and a sharp feeling of anger rose in his soul against the cruel conduct of these heathens. The poor boy looked so sad, wistful, and ill, he wondered how any one could have had the heart to turn him out so, to die by one of the most lingering of deaths—starvation. Quickly he drew a knife out of his pocket, cut the cord, and then, lifting him in his arms, he supported his feeble steps back to his own house; and he was as a father to the poor outcast, day by day he watched by him as he tossed in a fever, gave him medicine from his own hand, tended his sores, and learned to love the boy he had saved as if he were his own flesh and blood.

On the poor boy's recovery Mr. Smith tended his soul as he had done his body, and in due time he admitted him into the Christian Church by Holy Baptism, giving him the name of Joseph. Like Joseph of old he had been saved by God's mercy from perishing. Joseph was a very good boy, orderly, obedient, and most active in persuading the heathen boys about, to come to listen to Christian teaching. To Mr. Smith he was most devoted, anticipating his smallest wishes, perfectly happy to sit and look at him, or listen to him for hours together. Very different too, he looked now, no longer naked and bleeding, but clothed in a white suit, which showed off his black skin, and a little red fez on his head.

One day Mr. Smith was obliged to journey towards a distant part of the island to visit the chief of a large village. He travelled on a donkey with his little white tent done up on its back, taking food with him. In the heat of the day it was impossible to travel, but being anxious to get home again as fast as possible he travelled as much as he could, making all speed. He visited the chief and succeeded in making a friendly agreement with him to build a small church if a clergyman or catechist could be obtained for the village.

He began his homeward journey, but feeling great pains in his head and limbs he knew that the dreadful fever, so common in that climate, was creeping on him, and dreaded to face the thought of it, so far away from help of any kind. At length the pain grew so severe he could no longer sit on the donkey, so, tethering the poor beast to a tree, he unfurled the little white tent and lay down under it. He lay down feeling that the hope of rising again was very small; often had he faced death under different forms, but still it was dread-

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ful to die here quite alone, with no kind hand to smooth his pillow or minister to his last dying needs. The whole day he lay racked with pain, feverish with thirst, yet without power to fetch a drop of water; he longed with an exceeding longing for one cup of good English tea,—no hope of that for the solitary sick man; when, lo! he opens his eyes and sees a little black figure squatting by his side; he thinks he is dreaming, or perhaps he has already passed the dark river and is in heaven. The little black figure has a packet in his hand; yes, it is Joseph, the faithful black boy, who, with the keen instinct of his race, has tracked him all this long way from home, guided by his deep affection to his preserver. Soon Mr. Smith has his wished-for-cup of tea made out of the little brown packet that wise Joseph had been thoughtful enough to bring with him—for he knew how fond the English are of tea. Truly he seemed like a messenger from God to that poor sick man,—sick, but dying no longer, for now he is refreshed and revived under the loving care bestowed upon him. God has given him his life for the life that he had saved, his act of goodness had been rewarded a thousand-fold. Are they not often? We talk and hear of ingratitude and evil returns, but surely, as a poet hath said,—

'Alas! the gratitude of man
Hath oftener left me mourning.'

A true ending to a true story.

STEPHENSON'S DOG.

STEPHENSON still found time to attend to his favourite animals while working at the Water-row Pit. George, like his father, used to tempt the robin-redbreasts to hop and fly about him at the engine-fire by the bait of bread-crumbs saved from his dinner. But his favourite animal was his dog—so sagacious that he performed the office of a servant almost every day in carrying his master's dinner to him at the pit.

The tin containing the food was suspended from the dog's neck, and, thus laden, he proudly walked the road from Jolly's-close to Water-row Pit, quite through the village of Newburn. He turned neither to left nor right, nor minded for a time the barking of curs at his heels. But his course was not always free from perils. One day the big, strange dog of a passing butcher spied the engineman's messenger, ran after him, and fell upon him with the tin can about his neck. There was a terrible tussle and worrying between the dogs, which lasted for a while; and shortly after the dog's master, anxious for his dinner, saw his faithful dog approaching, bleeding but triumphant. The tin can was still round his neck, but the dinner had tumbled out in the struggle. Though George went without his dinner that day, when the circumstances of the combat were related to him by the villagers who had seen it, he was prouder of his dog than ever.—*Smiles' Lives of the Engineers.*

THE HIGHLAND LASSIE.

WITH merry blue eyes, and with loose, flowing hair,
With fresh rosy cheeks, and her pretty feet bare,
With a tattered straw bonnet, that loosely is tied,
And a little rush basket that hangs at her side,
Which she fills full with heather bells, lilac and blue,
And daisies and berries of many a hue,
My sweet Highland lassie is singing as gay
As a little sky-lark at the break of the day.

My pretty young child, can I take you with me,
My little pet servant and maiden to be,
Away from this moorland so dismal and drear,
To be nurse to my own little baby and dear;
To sing your sweet songs, all so lively and gay,
To my merry young folks at the time of their play?
Oh, come, my good maiden, and do not say nay;
Let us leave these bleak mountains and hasten away.

O lady, my mother is aged and poor,
And scarcely can walk to her own cottage door;
My father is dead, and no other has she,
To help and to tend her but poor little me.

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The Highland Lassie.

No! while mother lives, by her side will I stay,
To watch her by night, and to cheer her by day;

But when mother dies, and in her grave is laid,
Oh, send for me then, for your own little maid.

School Songs.

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THE WIDOW AND HER BOY.

DEAR mother, oft you talk to me
About that world on high,
Where dwell the spirits of the just
When their frail bodies die.

But I can scarcely understand
How they find entrance there;
I see no portals to the sky,
No pathway through the air.

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The widow drew her prattling boy
Still closer to her breast,
As in low and loving tones she spoke
About the heavenly rest,
And told him that if now he walked
In wisdom's narrow way,
That path would safely lead him on
To everlasting day.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

JONATHAN AND DAVID.

WHEN the lad had gathered up the arrows and had brought them to his master, *Jonathan gave his artillery* (his bow and quiver of arrows) *unto the lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city* (1 Sam. xx. 40), and as soon as the lad was gone, David stepped forth from behind the rock Ezel to bid farewell to his friend.

It was then, as it still is, the custom in Eastern lands, when drawing near to a king or a prince, to stand still and bow at certain intervals, and thus it was that *David fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times* before Jonathan. But soon, forgetting their difference of rank and all else but their love for each other, *they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded* in weeping. Perhaps his excess of tears was owing to the thought that he was about to become a wanderer, not only from the place where Jonathan lived, but from his own wife, and his parents, and his home. But, as we may be almost certain that during this hurried meeting Jonathan gave David a short account of what had happened at the king's table during the feast, it is likely that David wept thus because his tender, loving heart was overwhelmed by the generous conduct of the prince who had risked his own life to save David from death, and who was even now risking it again by meeting him in the field.

Jonathan seems to have kept down his grief in order to comfort his friend with calm and trustful parting words. At their last meeting, Jonathan, feeling sure that David would yet be king of Israel, had caused him to swear that he would hereafter show kindness not only to Jonathan himself, but to all his descendants as well (1 Sam. xx. 14–16), and Jonathan in return had made a covenant with David. So now, remembering this, Jonathan said to David, *Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between thee and me, and between my seed and thy seed for ever.* But it was quite time for David to make his escape from Saul; so he arose and departed southwards to the city of Nob, and Jonathan returned up the hill to his home in Gibeah.

We do not find that the friends met more than once again in this world, and then it was only by stealth in a wood, when Jonathan was anxious to *strengthen David's hand in God*, in the midst of his afflictions. (1 Sam. xxiii. 16–18.) And how did Jonathan do this? Not by money, nor by armed men, nor by any plot against the cruel king's life, but by reminding David of God's promises, of his having had His presence with him hitherto, and of the many mercies which had already been shown to him. The very sight of Jonathan just then must have been refreshing to David, but still better were those encouraging words that were so generously spoken, and were followed most cheeringly by a renewal for the third time of the covenant which they had made at Gibeah.

From the account of this their last meeting on earth, we see that Jonathan still submitted cheerfully to God's will, and that he still hoped for happier times when David should be king of the land, and when he should himself be next him in rank. But God in His infinite mercy and wisdom had appointed a different lot for the faithful, loving Jonathan, and the very day from which we date David's accession to the crown, was also the day on which God called Jonathan home to that heavenly Rest where alone there is *perfect* friendship, and where partings are unknown.

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It was because they loved each other so well that these two friends rejoiced to renew their covenant of friendship. From their example we may learn that the more we love God, our heavenly Father and Friend, the closer we shall draw near to Him and the oftener we shall seek Him in prayer. Often, too, we should call to mind the blessed privileges given us by God in our baptismal covenant—the being made 'members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven;' and as often as we think of this, we shall ask for grace to keep the vows which form our side of that holy covenant—to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh; to believe all the articles of the Christian faith; and to keep God's holy will and commandments, walking in the same all the days of our life.

'We must keep our early promise
We must guard what He has given,
Till the Lord, Who loved and saved us,
Take us to our home in heaven.'

DEEDS, NOT WORDS.

'TIS a very sad story I have to relate,
Of a quarrel that happened beside our own grate;
And really it grieves me such things should transpire
In a well-ordered mansion, and near a bright fire.

Well, as I was sitting quite silent and mute,
I first heard the Poker begin the dispute;
And he said to the Tongs (who was close by his side),
'It is time you abandon your folly and pride,
And, really, I think you must candidly own
How very absurd and conceited you've grown,
That you venture to say you're more needed than I,
When for days quite unheeded and useless you lie.
Then all that you do is to make a great racket,
And elbow me out of my place on the bracket;
And Mary the housemaid said only this morning,
She really did think she must give mistress warning:
You gained her no credit, but only a scold,
You were always so tiresome, rusty, and old.'

'As to *old*,' said the Tongs, 'I'm the same age as you;
The Fender and Shovel the same ages too:
We were bought all together—I'd thank you to be
A bit more respectful in manner to me;
For *I* have a mission *you* could not fulfil,
While stupid and helpless you have to lie still.
You can stick your black nose into many a hole,
But when could you ever pick up a live coal?
I grant that you often can stir up a flame,
But you're no sort of use to extinguish the same;
While only last week I took hold of a cinder,
And saved the best rug being burnt into tinder.
I care not for Mary, that impudent wench,
Who tries my unfortunate hinges to wrench;
It is she who my beauty and brightness will spoil,
By her folly in using sand-paper and oil.
'Tis her idleness only, and no fault of mine;
If I only were burnished I *know* I could shine.'

The Shovel joined in here,—'What fools you two are,
Not to know that I'm really more needed by far!
You, Poker! have only one thing you can do;
You, Tongs! can but pick up a cinder or two,
While I can replenish the whole of the fire;—
'Tis my business to see that it does not expire.
I scrape up the ashes, I put on the coal—
Indeed 'tis my place to attend to the whole.'

Some Wood that was burning now gave a loud pop,
And said, 'Fire-irons! I beg you will stop,
For I have one word just to say to you all
Before into dust and to ashes I fall.
Would it not be far wiser to work than to boast
About which one among you is doing the most?
You each have your duties for which you were made,
And should all be contented alike with your trade.
Let each mind the business that to him belongs
And be useful as Poker or Shovel or Tongs.'

These were the last words of the sensible Spark
As he fell into ashes and left the room dark:
While I thought, This same warning us mortals will suit,
There is work for us all, and no need to dispute,
If each did his duty, and none tried to shirk,
The division of labour would save half the work,
The useful among us have no time to spare;
So let '*Deeds, and not Words*,' be the motto we bear.

F. S. C.

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Jonathan and David.

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OLD GOTTLIEB.

SOME years ago, says a lady, I made the acquaintance of an old peasant, in a little German village, where I for some time resided. He was called Gottlieb, a name which has the very beautiful signification,

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'The love of God.' The old man was well worthy of it; for, if ever heart was filled with love to God, and to all God's creatures, it was his. Like most of the villagers, he possessed one or two apple and pear trees, and used to amuse himself in the summer by picking up the fallen fruit, and heaping it up in a corner of the shed. Once, when walking, I came upon him as he was stooping to pick up a fallen apple. 'Don't you weary, Gottlieb,' I asked, 'stooping so often, and then lying all alone by the roadside?' 'No, no, Miss,' he answered, smiling, and offering me a handful of ripe pears. 'I don't weary; I'm just waiting—waiting. I think I'm about ripe now, and I must soon fall to the ground; and then, just think, the Lord will pick me up! Oh, Miss, you are young yet, and perhaps just in blossom: turn well round to the Sun of Righteousness, that you may ripen sweet for His service.'

THE JEALOUS SISTERS.

'MOTHER, who was the lady that spoke so kindly to us in the drawing-room, to-day?' asked Harriet.

'That was my Aunt Lucy,' replied her mother, 'of whom I have told you so often.'

'Is that really the Aunt Lucy who was so fond of you, long ago? I am glad we have seen her. But I thought she lived very far away?'

'She has been for many years abroad, but now she has come with her son and grandchildren, to reside in this neighbourhood.'

'I like her very much,' remarked Helen; 'and I am not surprised, mother, that you loved her dearly, for she looks so kind.'

'You are right, Helen: she is most good-natured and indulgent to children, and has just invited you to spend a few days at her house.'

'How delightful!' exclaimed Helen.

'Am I to go, too?' asked Harriet.

'No, dear; your Aunt did not invite you.'

Harriet's eyes filled with tears, which she vainly tried to control; and at length, hiding her head in her mother's lap, she gave way to a burst of crying.

'What is the matter, dear?'

'Oh, Helen and I have never been separated before, and it was very unfair of Aunt Lucy to invite her without me!'

'My child, it was not in the least unfair. Your aunt has a perfect right to ask whom she pleases. Helen being the eldest was chosen first. You cannot be disappointed, as you did not expect to go; and your father and I will do our best to make you happy while she is away. I did hope my little girl would have rejoiced at anything which gave her sister pleasure.'

'But she will have so much enjoyment!' sobbed Harriet. 'Aunt Lucy will be kind and take her about, and show her pretty places; and she will have a great many children to play with; and no one will care that I am left at home by myself, like a naughty child. And, indeed, I am quite as good as Helen!'

'Mother,' interrupted Helen, 'is it not very hard that Harriet always wants to go wherever I am asked? It is most unkind and selfish of her. I am older, and it is natural people should like me better.'

'You certainly are a little older, Helen, but I don't think it at all natural that every one should prefer you to your sister. I fear that, under the same circumstances, you would have acted quite as selfishly. It grieves me to see my little girls show such jealous feelings towards each other.'

'May I go and get ready, now, mother?'

'Yes, Helen, you may go; but I would rather you had behaved more lovingly towards your younger sister.'

Helen hurried off to prepare for her visit, and in the afternoon was taken by her father and mother to Aunt Lucy's pretty country home. Harriet refused to be of the party, as she could not bear the thought of returning home while her sister was left behind; and even had she been able to repress a fresh burst of tears, her eyes were so red they would have told their own tale. Therefore she preferred remaining alone in her room, and giving vent to her selfish grief.

Meantime Helen arrived at her aunt's

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house, and was warmly greeted by her cousins, who rushed to the door to receive and welcome her.

'Why did not Harriet come?' asked Aunt Lucy. 'I was very sorry I could not ask her to stay also, but I have so many grandchildren here at present, that I have only room for one little girl at a time.'

Helen did not feel altogether pleased at this kind speech, and replied,—

'Harriet could not come with us to-day, she was crying so much, because I was to have the pleasure of staying here for a few days and she was not.'

'I hope, my dear, that was not the reason your sister cried. I daresay she was sorry to lose you for a time.'

'Yes, indeed, aunt, it was all because she was not to have the pleasure herself; for the instant she heard you had been kind enough to invite me she said, "Am I to go too?"'

Aunt Lucy said no more on the subject, but she did not think the better of either of her nieces after this conversation.

Helen enjoyed her visit extremely; every one was kind, and she could not help observing, with some surprise, how good-natured her cousins were to each other, and how all rejoiced when their brothers and sisters were happy.

On the day appointed for Helen's departure, she was astonished that Aunt Lucy did not ask her to remain a little longer, although all the children begged she would not go so soon, and complained that her visit was very short. So Helen returned home, and a long time passed on. Aunt Lucy's house was considered the most delightful resort by all the young people in the neighbourhood. It did seem strange that her nieces were the only children of her acquaintance never invited to stay there; for Helen's visit was not repeated, and Harriet's turn never came.

At length a report reached their ears that Aunt Lucy was going to give her grandchildren and all their friends a great treat. It was to be a pic-nic party to a beautiful wood some miles distant, but was not to take place immediately, as the spring weather was rather cold, and all agreed in preferring to wait for the pleasant flowery month of June, which is usually so bright and warm. The plan was to remain all day, have a cold dinner spread under the shade of the ancient trees, and towards evening return to the house to end the day with all kinds of merry games.

'Harriet,' said Helen, 'I wonder whether we shall be invited?'

'Of course we shall!' replied the sister. 'It would be very hard to leave us out when every strange child in the country is asked.'

'I think Aunt Lucy will take me,' remarked Helen, 'because I have been staying at her house, and she knows me. She did not look half pleased when she heard that you said, "Am I to go too?"'

'Well, you had no business to tell her what I said; and I am sure, if she invites either of us now, it will be me, because it is my turn next, and she would not be doubly unfair.'

And so the little girls often disputed in a most unkind and unsisterly spirit. But soon a sad event occurred which changed their feelings.

One day they were enjoying a drive with their parents, in a small open carriage, when the horse took fright at some object on the bank, and becoming unmanageable, rushed madly on, and made a sudden turn down a narrow road. The little girls who were seated behind, were caught by the branch of an overhanging tree, and thrown to some distance. Harriet fell upon a heap of stones, and her head was much hurt. Helen fell on a softer place, a green mossy bank, and although slightly stunned and much frightened, she quickly recovered, so as to be able to rise and run to her sister. 'Harriet can you not get up?' she asked: 'do try!' Receiving no answer, she endeavoured with all her strength to assist her to rise: but it was in vain. Then stooping over the pale, insensible form, she gazed at it earnestly, until a horrible thought crossed her mind. Moments seemed hours as she stood there in a silent agony of sorrow and remorse.

'She is dead! she is dead!' at length she found voice to exclaim: 'gone from me for ever! Oh, that I had been kinder and gentler while she was with me! I shall never hear her speak to me again!'

(*Concluded in our next.*)

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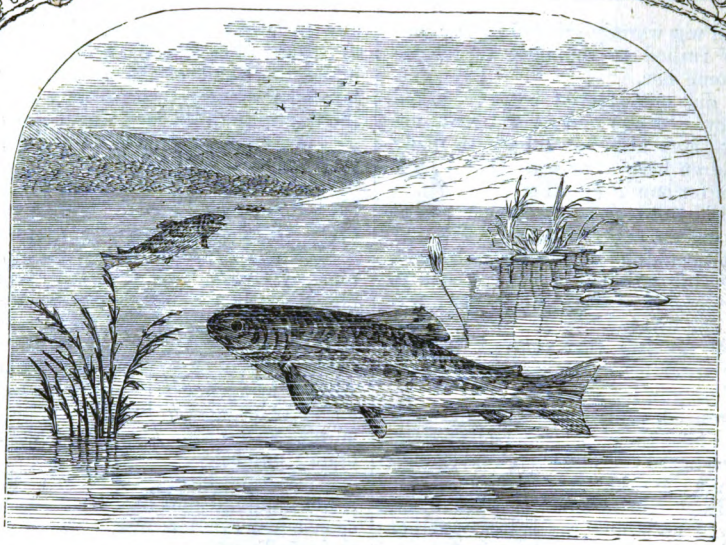

THE FOOLISH FISH.

'DEAR mother,' said a little fish,
'Pray is not that a fly?
I'm very hungry, and I wish
You'd let me go and try.'

'Sweet innocent,' the mother cried,
And started from her nook,
'That horrid fly is meant to hide
The sharpness of a hook.'

Now, as I've heard, this little trout
Was young and silly too,
And so he thought he'd venture out
To see what he could do.

And round about the fly he played,
With many a longing look;
And often to himself he said,
'I'm sure that's not a hook.

'I can but give one little pluck
To try, and so I will.'
So on he went, and lo, it stuck
Quite through his little gill.

And as he faint and fainter grew,
With hollow voice he cried,
'Dear mother, if I'd minded you,
I should not thus have died.'

JANE TAYLOR.

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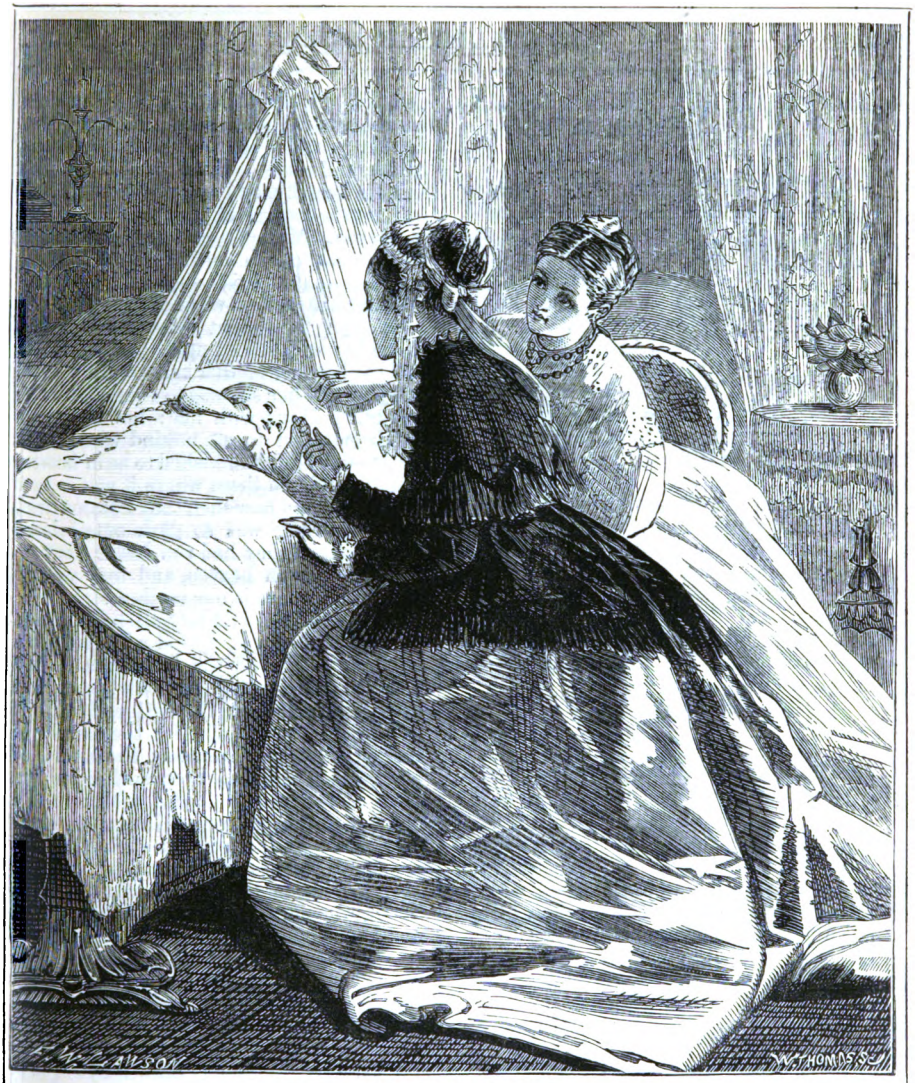

THE BABY.

ANOTHER little wave
Upon the sea of life;
Another soul to save,
Amid the toil and strife.

Two more little feet
To walk the dusty road;
To choose where two paths meet,
The narrow and the broad.

Two more little hands
To work for good or ill;
Two more little eyes;
Another little will;

Another heart to love,
Receiving love again.
And so the baby came,
A thing of joy and pain.

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THE CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

(*Continued from p. 20.*)

OH, ma'am, two half-frozen children,' replied the maid.

'Come nearer,' said the lady kindly, and she drew the children into the room, from which the bright light proceeded.

Yes! here it was bright, dazzlingly bright. In the middle of the room stood a large green Christmas tree, decorated with many lights. No sweetmeats hung on it, but here and there little angels were suspended from the green branches, who, with their white robes and golden wings, seemed to wish to announce glad tidings to the children as they entered. Beautiful music sounded forth; there sat a man before an organ, several little rosy-cheeked children stood beside him, and with the full tones of the organ the children's tender voices were mingled. They sang,—

'Quiet night, holy night,
Shepherds were the first to hear,
From the Angels' Hallelujah,
News which sounds from far and near,
Jesus the Saviour is here! Jesus the Saviour is here!'

Hans and Maria stood trembling at the door. Hans was quite amazed, his eyes looked twice as large as usual. Maria clasped her hands devoutly. Was she then really in heaven now? It could not be more beautiful there. The pale lady looked down kindly on the two little frozen orphan children. Now the song was ended, the gentleman came up to the children and asked,—

'Children, who are you? and what are you seeking for?'

'We are seeking for heaven,' replied Maria, in a soft voice, 'and we have come such a long way in order to find it—and now it is here, is it not?' she added somewhat anxiously.

'Would to God it were!' said the gentleman, but the lady drew the children to her. 'Come children, warm yourselves first, and I will give you something warm to eat and drink, and then you can tell me more. And she took off the children's handkerchiefs, led them to the warm stove, and, like a kind mother, provided them with tea, bread and butter, and cakes. Hans found it very nice and ate heartily, and was very pleased, and had not the least doubt but that he was now in heaven. Maria was not quite sure: after a little while she looked round for her mother, and at last she asked timidly whether her mother was not here?

'Tell me then about your mother,' asked the lady; and, seated upon her lap, Maria told her how her mother had gone to heaven, and had told her she was to come there too, and bring Hans with her; how then they had been taken to an unkind woman, and how to-day they had wished to be in heaven, and to climb up there where it was so very low down; and how then they became tired, and everything was so dark out-of-doors, and how then they had run here: 'but are we really now in heaven, and may we stay here? and where is our mother?'

Full of wonder and pity all had listened to this simple story. 'God will give you a mother again,' said the lady gently, 'but now you must go to bed; look! your little brother has already fallen asleep.'

The children readily let themselves be carried into another room; the kind lady undressed them, and then both were laid down in a snow-white bed, for Maria would not be separated from Hans; the lady pressed a kiss on the children's brows, clasped her hands and whispered gently, 'You have been looking for heaven, you will find it too. Those who seek Thee early shall find Thee, and of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

And now the children lay down in the warm bed. From the next room the soft sounds of music came gently down upon them; the tree with its lights and all the white angels hovered before their eyes; yes, now they felt sure that they were in heaven, as their weary eyelids closed, and they dreamt sweet dreams of heavenly joy.

But in the next room, an hour later, a husband and wife sat in earnest conversation. They were the master and mistress of the house in which the poor wandering children had found a refuge.

The lights on the tree were put out; their own children had at last said good

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night to all its glories, and been obliged to go to bed; there now sat father and mother, consulting what should be done with these two children.

'I know very well,' said Dr. Neuring, 'they are the children of Frau Werner, that strange lady who lived here a short time, and then died. My partner, who visited her several times, told me all about it. Her death came quite unexpectedly upon him. And the children were then taken to Schönthal, to Frau Soro, who is the most ill-natured, miserly woman I know. Poor children! have they then no relations, I wonder?'

'It appears not,' replied the doctor's wife; 'no one seems to trouble themselves about them. But is it not strange that the children should come straight to us, and on this holy Christmas Eve?'

'Yes, indeed! and go out in order to look for heaven,' said the doctor, thoughtfully; 'that is rare in our day. But I know I always believed, as a child, that the world came to an end on the horizon, and that the heavens sank down to the earth. It is well that the lights from our tree guided them here—the children might have been frozen to death in the night.'

'I wonder if they really believe that they are now in heaven?' said the lady of the house. 'I can imagine that the contrast when they entered the bright room after the dark field must have confirmed them in the belief; but now, tell me, dear husband, can we turn them adrift into the wide world; should we not try to bring them up for—for heaven?' The lady looked at her husband entreatingly, her eyes full of tears.

'What do you mean? that we should keep the children here? What, both? and for always?'

'Yes, Frederick, I think so. Remember, to-day He became a poor child—came down to us—and what should we have been if we had not Him? Now He sends us to-day, this very evening, two poor children who are seeking for heaven, and they have neither father nor mother, nor any one else here. Frederick, I shall never have any rest if we send these children away from us!'

'But, dear wife,' replied the doctor, after a pause, 'have you reckoned what it costs to keep two more children? We are not rich, and our own children are growing up, and will cost us more and more money each year.'

'Frederick, He became poor for our sakes; can we not endure to become somewhat poorer for His sake? I have often thought how little we give Him, indeed nothing which it is hard and painful for us to miss. I promise you I will readily deny myself in articles of comfort, furniture, or clothing; we will henceforth live much more simply, and then we shall have enough for both children.' And the kind lady looked at her husband, in whose features it was plainly written that he thought just as she did.

'In God's name, then,' he said, earnestly, 'we will keep them.'

'Do not be anxious,' said the doctor's wife: 'what we undertake for His sake leads to a good end. I shall try to get up earlier than formerly to make the children's clothes. I have so many old things lying by that we need not buy anything new; I shall be very industrious, and then I am sure to succeed.'

'Let me bear my share too,' interrupted her husband; 'henceforth from to-day I will not smoke any more; what I spend in cigars makes up a good sum; from to-day smoking must cease, which to me—do not laugh—will be no easy matter. Then, if we keep these children we must educate them with our own. They must learn what will be useful to them.'

'Before all things we must strive,' said the doctor's wife, 'that they should find with us what they are seeking for—heaven. Of Him Who is the way thither they appear as yet to know but little; shall it not then be our first endeavour to make these poor little pilgrims true citizens of the heavenly kingdom?'

'So, indeed, it shall be,' answered the doctor: 'come, we will ask God's blessing upon it.'

And now both knelt down, and commended their work to Him in Whose name they had begun it, and He heard their prayer.

It was past midnight as the doctor and his wife stood beside the bed of the strange children, who now had a home again.

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and they vowed to be a father and mother to them till God should take them at last to His heavenly kingdom. And when they both bent down to kiss their new children, God looked down from His heavenly throne, and had pleasure in them.

'Such a Christmas eve I have never yet experienced,' said the doctor's wife; it seems as if the Christ-child had come to us in quite a different way from formerly. I am as happy and glad as if He were in the house in His own person.' And so the good couple went to their rest.

(*To be continued.*)

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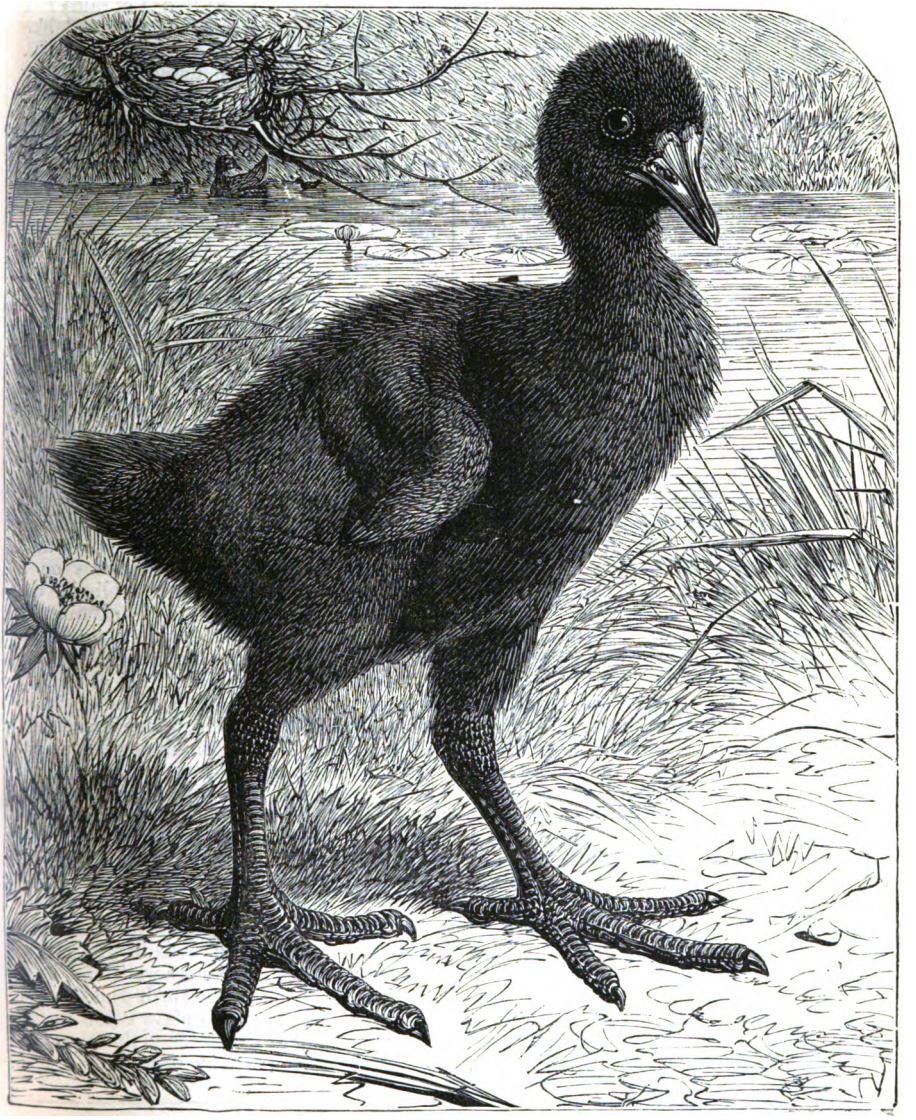
THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IV.] APRIL, 1870. [One Penny.



The Baby Moorhen.

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THE BABY MOORHEN.

THE Waterhen ought to be the name of the perky little chap, who reminds one of the foolish chicken in *The Prize*, which all its readers must remember wanted to swim like the ducks in the pond. Our little friend is, however, quite right; because, although only a few days old, he has been swimming about, diving and catching gnats and water-spiders a good deal. Waterhens leave the nest for the water almost as soon as they are hatched, and an old Waterhen mother has been seen to carry a young one on each foot to the water, as the nest was some distance off in a tree. The male bird, in that case, builds a second nest close to the water's edge, as a bedroom at night for his little ones. Where not disturbed, the shy and wary Waterhen becomes very tame, and pretty it is to see the young ones bask in the sun, or playing about. The old birds of the whole tribe are bold in defence of their young. A pair of Australian Waterhens at the Zoological Gardens, in the Regent's Park, entirely subdued the formidable Beaver, whose pond and enclosure they share. They stole his bed for the nest, and he dare not show while 'their children' were about. In another enclosure, I was shown some chicks and hens of the large splendid blue Waterhens from abroad, in company with some wild swans. Kind Mr. Bartlett, the superintendent, wondered why those Swans were close by the railing—an unusual place for them. Presently we found out that they helped the mothers to keep watch over a number of young Waterhens, which sported through the high grass and bushes of their pleasant prison. Powerful as the Swan is, that active, long-clawed, sharp-beaked Waterhen, would successfully fight it, were it inclined to hurt her young. But like those other handsome fellows, the Pelicans, Swans have an instinctive love of protecting weaker birds of their own species, or strangers which they know. I have seen this often.

JACOB KELLERN.

YOU would like to hear about a little German lad, a great friend of mine? I wonder if you will like him as much as I did. His name was Jacob Kellern: you must call him Yacobe, not Jacob. He was ten years old. I will tell you how I came to know him. I was staying, in the summer of 1866, at K—— in Germany, such a pretty place, not far from the beautiful blue Rhine the Germans love to sing about. K—— is divided into two parts, the old and new town. Which would you have liked the best? In the old town the streets are very narrow, and the road is paved all over alike, so that the carts and horses go quite close to the house doors,—no pavement as we have in England; and then the houses themselves, how odd you would think them. Each story larger than the one beneath it, the roofs hanging over, just like the card houses you build, and sometimes each story painted a different colour. The shopkeepers have painted pictures of what they sell outside their shops, sometimes on a board and sometimes on the blind; the shoemaker has boots and shoes all over his blind, and the watchmaker has a signboard with such a big watch on it, over his door.

In the new towns the streets are wider, and are all planted with rows of trees, with benches under them, where the women sit and knit while the children play about. Such funny little children you would call them,—the little girls with plaits of flaxen hair hanging down their backs, and bright-coloured handkerchiefs, blue, red, and yellow, folded over their heads, and tied round their laughing little faces; and then the boys! toddling little things of barely two years old, dressed like their fathers. There are beautiful gardens in this part of the town, where the visitors walk and drink the waters, which do so much good to sick people. Here the band plays twice in the day; it begins at six o'clock in the morning, so some of you sleepy little ones would

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have no chance of hearing it. Beyond the gardens are beautiful hills, rising up so high, and covered with vines, which were in blossom when I was there, and scented the air very sweetly.

'But you are not telling us about Jacob.' Wait a minute and you shall hear all.

One day as I was sitting working under the trees in the Keer Garten, I noticed a group of children playing at soldiers; one bright-eyed, sturdy, good-natured-looking little man was acting captain: it was amusing to see the earnest way in which he gave the word of command. Attention! Present arms! Fire! entering so thoroughly into the game. Very merry and pleasant did the little voices sound. Suddenly a lull came, and then some angry words,—

'It is very unkind of you, Jacob, very unkind indeed, if you go in just in the middle of the game; you know we can't play properly without you. I believe you do it to tease.'

I looked up to see who the small deserter was, and found it was the little bright-eyed captain.

'I am very sorry, Hans, but mother said I must be back by four o'clock, and it is just that now, for here comes the band! I must take mother's basket into the town;' and without stopping to argue the matter any longer, the child ran off towards home, nodding good-bye to his play-fellows.

There is a brave little lad, I thought, with courage to do the right thing, and stand the fire of teasing.

The next day I saw Jacob again; this time he was not playing, but gravely walking about, nursing his baby-sister I supposed,—such a queer little baby with a long frock and close little cap made of pink calico without any border, and long earrings, for all German babies wear earrings. Is it not a funny custom? and a silly one too, I think.

I thought I should like to make friends with Jacob, and began by offering him some cherries. 'Bette' (if you please), said he, but I saw most of the cherries found their way to the baby's mouth, Jacob having carefully taken out the stones. He said he was ten years old, and meant to be a soldier like father, some day. He earned what money he could by running errands, carrying water to the hotels, but had no regular work. It came on to rain just then, so I had to wish my little friend good-bye, and hurry home.

The lady with whom I was staying was an invalid, and had come to K—— to drink the waters; she was lame, and had to go about in what we should call in England a bath-chair. It struck me how good it would be if we could employ Jacob regularly to draw the chair every day, as it was very difficult to get one of the garden-boys just when you wanted one. The next day I asked Jacob if he would like it, and told him what we would pay him. You should have seen his eyes sparkle with delight. 'Oh, yes, he would be so glad; the money would help mother with the rent, and Thekla would soon have her new shoes.'

The child seemed to think he had come into a little fortune. The next morning at six o'clock there was Jacob at the door of the hotel, and very carefully did he draw the chair; I soon saw he was a little boy who did his best in anything he had to do; he was a little gentleman too. I can see him now, offering us the morning glass of water, his cap in his hand, and his honest sunburnt face beaming with smiles. Jacob came every day and we grew great friends; he told me his father was with the army in Bohemia, and now the terrible war had really begun; he had six brothers and sisters, his mother earned what she could by washing, but with so many little ones to look after she had not much time; Thekla, the eldest, was blind, so she could not help much. My friend was as much interested in Jacob as I was, and one day she gave him a new pair of boots, his old ones were so full of holes, that the rough roads cut his feet very much; he seemed very pleased and grateful, but, strange to say, the next morning he came again in the old boots; we could get nothing from him about them, he only blushed and looked down when we questioned him; and when a new straw-hat I gave him disappeared in the same way, I resolved to give Jacob nothing more till I had seen his home and friends.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

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At the Foot of the Cross, from a Painting by Scheffer.

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At the Foot of the Cross.

LORD of my heart, by Thy last cry,
Let not Thy blood on earth be spent;
Lo, at Thy feet I fainting lie,
Mine eyes upon Thy wounds are bent.

* * * * * *

Wash me and dry these bitter tears,
O let my heart no further roam;
'Tis Thine by vows, and hopes, and fears,
Long since—O call Thy wanderer home.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

AHIMELECH AND DAVID.

A GREAT change had now taken place in David's life. Until this time nothing had been said in public about his coming to the throne, except indeed Saul's angry exclamation, *What can he have more but the kingdom?* (1 Sam. xviii. 8.) But now the king had declared at his table during the Feast of the New Moon that, as David was a traitor who was trying to become king, he must be immediately brought to court to be put to death. It was on this account that David became a wanderer during the remainder of Saul's life. And how did he bear so great a change? For a time he lost the firm faith which had served as a shield to protect him from harm, and by losing this he laid himself open to temptation, and fell into sin almost as soon as he had parted from Jonathan.

To the south of the valley in which the parting took place there was a hill, on the top of which stood a city called Nob, just as Gibeah stood on the hill to the north of the same valley. As the Tabernacle had been removed to Nob, the place was the abode of the high-priest, Ahimelech, and of eighty-five priests with their families, and the Gibeon-

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ites, who were the servants of the Tabernacle. When David set out from Gibeah on his wanderings, it was within an hour or two of the Sabbath, which was reckoned to begin at sunset on the sixth day of the week, and he chose Nob for his place of refuge until the day of rest should be past.

The cities of Gibeah and Nob were within sight of each other, but, as travelling any distance on the Sabbath was unlawful, there was no fear that Saul would send after him, or that any one from Nob would carry tidings of him that day to Gibeah. As soon as he reached the city he went to the Tabernacle; but when Ahimelech saw him he was afraid that David had again fallen under the king's displeasure, and that it would not be safe to receive him, so *he said unto him, Why art thou alone and no man with thee?* (1 Sam. xxi. 1.) The high-priest knew that David, the king's son-in-law, was usually attended by a guard of honour, but now he stood alone before him. That David actually had some people with him we know from the New Testament (St. Matt. xii. 3; and St. Mark, ii. 25), but probably they were only a few of his private servants whom he had appointed to meet him between Gibeah and Nob, and who were now waiting near at hand while he spoke to Ahimelech.

Sad to say, David deceived Ahimelech by answering that he was going on some important secret business for Saul. Not only was this a lie, but it was spoken in the House of the Lord to His own anointed servant.

David next said what was true, that his followers were to meet him at an appointed place, and then he asked for five loaves of bread for himself and his men. Ahimelech told him that he had none but the hallowed bread, by which he meant the shewbread, that was eaten only by the priests. The shewbread was an offering of unleavened loaves, or cakes of fine flour, the loaves being twelve in number, because there were twelve tribes in Israel. The table of shewbread was of wood, overlaid with gold, and was furnished with dishes, spoons, covers, and bowls of pure gold. It stood in the holy place on the right side of the altar of incense, and upon it were placed the loaves in two rows of six each, with frankincense sprinkled upon each row.

The name shewbread (or bread of the presence) was given because the loaves were thus set out in the presence of the Lord from one Sabbath-day until the next. Fresh bread was placed upon the table every Sabbath by the priests, who then ate the old loaves in the holy place.

In the covered bowls upon the table there was kept a drink-offering of wine, which, like the bread, was renewed every week. We cannot read about bread and wine being placed upon the table of the Lord in the holy place of the Tabernacle without seeing that these represented under the Jewish covenant the same holy truths as are set forth in the new covenant by the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. It is true that the only people who might eat the shewbread were the priests, men of the house of Aaron, but under the new covenant the people of Christ are, in one sense, *all* priests to Him *that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.* (Rev. i. 6.)

Ahimelech yielded to David's entreaty, and gave him some loaves of the shewbread for himself and his followers. We are not left in doubt as to whether he was right in doing so. More than a thousand years after our Lord spoke of this occurrence, and showed the Pharisees that in cases of great need it was right to depart from such a ceremonial law as the one about eating the shewbread. Let us, then, remember that a tender care for the wants of our fellow-creatures is far more pleasing to God than the strictest outward observance of His laws can be, if we meanwhile neglect to help those who need our assistance.

David next asked Ahimelech to give him a sword or a spear, and in this matter again he deceived the high-priest by saying that he had brought neither, because *the king's business required haste.* It so happened that the only weapon in Ahimelech's possession was the sword which David had taken from Goliath, and which he had placed in the Tabernacle in remembrance of the victory that God had given him over the Philistine. So, when Ahimelech offered

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it him, he said, *There is none like that; give it me:* and as soon as the Sabbath was ended, *David arose and fled that day for fear of Saul.* So David's untruthfulness gained for him all that he asked—food, shelter, and an excellent weapon of defence, the best, no doubt, that there was in all the land; but his sin brought fatal consequences upon Ahimelech and his house, and laid desolate the happy, peaceful city of Nob.

While David was with Ahimelech, one of Saul's servants was *detained before the Lord* at Nob, no doubt because he could not continue his journey on the Sabbath. This man, Doeg, held the office of Saul's chief herdsman, which was a post of distinction in ancient times, when flocks and herds formed a very important part of the riches of a king. He was an Edomite, or descendant of Esau, and although he had become a worshipper of the true God, he felt all that hatred of Israel which still burned in the hearts of the Edomites, and now silently he had been watching all that took place in the Tabernacle.

David knew this man, and felt certain that, sooner or later, he would tell his master what he had seen; but yet he had gone so far into the way of lying that he was afraid or ashamed to draw back by confessing the truth to Ahimelech.

A few weeks after, Doeg was able to tell Saul what had happened at Nob. He told the truth about what Ahimelech had given to David, but he craftily said nothing about David's false pretence of being engaged in Saul's business, and he added an invention of his own, by saying that David had *inquired of the Lord*, had consulted the mysterious Urim and Thummim in the breast-plate of the high-priest, which was a privilege only enjoyed by the chief ruler of the nation. Saul was so enraged that he sent for Ahimelech and commanded that he should be put to death on the spot. When no Israelite dared to obey, Doeg and his men readily undertook the work of vengeance, and Ahimelech with eighty-five priests were slain by their swords. *And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.* (1 Sam. xxii. 19.) Abiathar, one of the sons of Ahimelech, alone escaped, and he fled for protection to David, who was greatly shocked and distressed at the consequences of his sin, saying, *I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house.*

Whether David's lying answers were given suddenly when he was startled by an unexpected question, or whether they were planned beforehand, there can be no excuse for the falsehood he told; for our God is a God of truth, and He requires us at all times to speak only the truth. Therefore let no fear of what may happen to us tempt us to tell a lie in the hope of escaping from danger. Even if, by God's mercy, we repent and are pardoned, we may find, as David did, that it is impossible to repair the mischief we have brought upon others by our departure from the strict truth. *Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour.* (Eph. iv. 25.)

THE LITTLE PHILOSOPHER PUZZLED.

I'VE a garden of my own;
In my garden is a mound,
On the mound there daisies are
In a pattern like a star,
And gravel-walks all round.

All my garden has a border,
All the border is of shells;
The shells are put all round the beds,
Where little flowers lift up their heads,
Or hang their pretty bells.

Lots of things grow in my garden,
Heaps of things I've planted there.
Best of all there is some cress,
That grows in letters E and S,
So I should know it anywhere.

I wonder how my garden did it!
What could make it think of S?
I wonder how it came to know
That E's for Edward, and not O,
That it should come up in the cress!

Smith, perhaps, will come up next!
I'll go and watch it every day;
For though the other seedlings grow
Only in a great round O,
I'll go and watch it every day,
For wonders never cease, they say!

J. E. C. F.

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David receiving Goliath's Sword.

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Spring.

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SPRING.

HAIL, the days of early Spring-time,
When the first young buds are seen,
When the air is soft and balmy,
And the daisies deck the green.

When the birds begin to twitter,
And the little lambs appear,
Frolicking with wild enjoyment,
In the childhood of the year.

Then has dreary Winter left us,
Bearing with it cold and gloom;
Hope once more our hearts inspiring,
Tinges all with rosy bloom.

And there thrills such joy within us,
At the beauty bursting round,
That no room for care and sorrow
Longer in our hearts is found.

Running brooks and murmuring breezes,
Bees, and birds, and fragrant flowers,
Cawing rooks, and lowing cattle,
Welcome back the spring-tide hours.

Then, since all the earth is joyful,
Let it now with praises ring,
Praise to him Who gave the sunshine,
Praise to Him Who made the Spring.

MRS. HAWTREY.

THE CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

(*Continued from page* 48.)

TWO GROWN-UP PEOPLE WHO HAVE FOUND HEAVEN.

FOUR-AND-TWENTY years have passed away. Several miles from Schönthal lies a little village named Samari, on the borders of it stands a pretty comfortable-looking house; in summer the green shutters and the green trees seem to vie with each other, as to which shall look the gayest. But to-day, when we come to Samari, the shutters have won the victory, for the trees stand quite leafless: it is winter, and the most beautiful day in the whole winter—it is Christmas day.

Do you remember Maria and Johannes Werner, the two poor orphan children who this day, four-and-twenty years ago, went out in order to seek for heaven? Have they found it yet? Dr. Neuring and his wife took them to their hearts and into their house, they treated them as if they were their own children, they taught them to make themselves useful in the house, in the garden, in the kitchen; they learned, too, to fold their hands and pray,—

'Blessed Saviour, make me good,
So that at last to Heaven I come.'

Johannes and Maria became pious children, who heartily loved their parents, and did all they could to please them. Maria had in her pride and violent temper much to contend against, but she tried to overcome her faults: she had never forgotten the promise made to her dear mother on her dying bed, to care for and watch over her little brother. Brother and sister were devoted to each other, quarrels or angry words were never heard between them.

Johannes' greatest delight was to accompany his adopted father when he went to see his sick people. Dr. Neuring had many patients to visit who lived far off: if the children were good, he took one or other with him. Johannes was soon not only his companion, but his assistant; the coachman might remain at home, Hans drove so well and carefully, it was quite a pleasure to see him.

One day he had to remain a long time before a house into which the doctor had gone to see a patient who was seriously ill; he must surely have completely forgotten Johannes, for one hour passed away after another, and the long waiting became still more tedious to the poor little coachman; it was cold and windy, hunger, too, tormented him, but then a brave boy ought not to mind that. No, Hans held the reins tight—here comes the doctor too! But he looks deeply affected, tears stand in his eyes, the master of the house accompanies him to the carriage.

'Doctor, after God I have to thank you for all that I possess,' he says, embracing him, and the children cling round him, too, kiss his hand, and all do something to show their love,—at last the carriage drives off. At this moment the doctor recollects for the first time his poor little coachman.

'Hans, my poor boy, what a long time I have kept you waiting!' and the doctor, who is not very liberal in his caresses, presses an affectionate kiss on his forehead.

Hans was proud, oh, how proud! this man who had just saved a human life, this man thought of him and kissed him.

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'Father, I will be a doctor too,' he murmured.

'Yes, you think that will be pleasanter than waiting so long outside, Hans, do you?'

'No, no; but I have so long wished to tell you, it is so grand to do so much good: do let me be a doctor, I will be very diligent, but let me be a doctor too, as you are.'

And Johannes became a doctor, although the end was not easily attained, although it cost years of hard work and earnest study; but who was happier than he was, now appointed physician at Samari, only a few miles from his friends at Schönthal? God blessed many cases which he treated, and young Dr. Werner won the confidence of the people. Samari was a large but poor mountain village, where he attended the poor gratuitously, and showed the same care, kindness, and love towards them as to his rich patients. This conduct won the hearts of all, and Johannes himself was happy in his calling; he liked best to be called the 'poor people's doctor,' and he was soon as well known in the houses of the poor as in his own. His sister Maria had not even now left her brother. At his request she came with him to Samari, and a pleasure indeed is it, to see this couple in the midst of their daily work and duties. Their life belongs to God. Because He has loved them, they love Him. Because they love Him, they must keep His commandments,—love all men, and show this love by their actions. Heaven had always looked more and more beautiful to them; they were still pilgrims, but their road was heavenwards, and they had only *one* desire —to guide all who were on the road with them to the city of God.

And now we are in Samari again, and it is the morning of Christmas day.

It is still early, yet there is bustle here and there in the street. Several people are going up to Dr. Werner's house, they have come across the country, to-day they must have got up early, they want to be home again in good time, and they know that they can always speak to the doctor quite early. He hears one after the other with his usual kindness, only now and then he says, 'May I ask you not to speak so loud? pray, shut the door gently.' At last they all know, one tells the other that the doctor wishes them to be very quiet, and soon, to his great joy, no loud noise is any longer heard.

'Doctor, I want to see Miss Maria,' begged a peasant woman at last.

'You cannot indeed speak to her now; she has been watching all night with a sick person and had so much work all day yesterday, at four o'clock this morning she was at last obliged to lie down, and she must not be aroused before nine.'

'Ah! I am very sorry for that.'

'And I, too!'

'And so am I!'

'I wanted so much to have seen her today. A sight of the young lady is itself quite a Christmas treat.'

'Good people,' implored the doctor, 'but if she does not spare herself more, she will indeed become quite ill.'

'Yes, indeed, she should take great care of herself. But when will she come to me? my John is quite unhappy if a couple of days pass without his seeing her.'

Just then the house door was opened, gentle steps were heard, the door of the room opened, and Maria entered, with a basket on her arm. All gazed at her in wonder, her brother could scarcely believe his eyes; she wished them all good morning, in a friendly voice.

'Maria, where have you come from?' the doctor inquired in a serious tone.

'From the bakehouse, dear Johannes; my cake has turned out admirably.'

'But you ought to have been sleeping now.'

'Well, I did, till six o'clock. But I must bake a cake for you myself to-day, or you would not think it nice;' and she embraced her brother warmly, but he said,—

'Ah, cakes here and cakes there, but your health is more valuable to me than all the cakes in the world.'

'Oh, how a doctor can torment one!' said Maria, merrily turning to the people: 'look at me; do I not look the picture of health?'

And when they all thus beheld her, with her eyes beaming with love, a bright colour on her face from the early morning walk, she looked as happy and healthy, as indeed she was. Now she spoke to the people, each had some want to be supplied. Here one begged for a little soup for his

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'I have to thank you for all that I possess.'

sick wife, there another wished for a diece more of her excellent plaister; here Miss Maria must come herself, —for all she had kind words, the petitions of many were granted.

(To be continued.)

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THE MEMORIAL WINDOW.

IT was Sunday evening, and service-time. Yet the little church of Lyndon-on-the-Sea was quite empty—true, lights burned in the church, and the doors were not fastened, but still there was no sound of praise or prayer in the building; no sound, indeed, of any sort, but the wail of the autumn wind as it beat on the grey walls and shook the lighted windows. Where was the congregation? where was the clergyman? So wondered little Giles Morton, a fisherman's son, as he pushed open the small side-door, and gazed in wonder at the empty seats. After thinking for a few moments, the boy softly retreated, and in spite of wind and rain made his way down the shingly path which led to the beach.

Here was the congregation—a few fishermen, their wives and children; and here was the clergyman, a pale young man, with eager eyes and earnest manner. 'They must be saved!' the clergyman was saying, 'they are close in shore; now, my lads, who will be first to volunteer?'

Every eye was turned towards a small vessel which lay hopelessly disabled not far from the beach, but no one spoke, though several women sobbed loudly.

All at once came a shrill cry from little Giles, 'It's the *Queen of the Wave*, and father's on board: oh, do save him!'

Two men who stood near the boy shook their heads. 'It's no manner of use sending good lives after bad,' said one, gloomily; 'and it is certain death to go out such a night as this.'

Just then a break in the clouds cast a stream of moonlight on the troubled sea,

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showing the wreck more plainly, and the men clinging to her for dear life.

Little Giles seized the clergyman's hand. 'Mr. Mayne, can't they save them? can't you save them?'

Mr. Mayne was greatly beloved by the children of his parish, and poor Giles in his terrible distress had the utmost faith in his willingness to help and in his power. Mr. Mayne looked at the sturdy fishermen, who thought it madness to venture a boat on such a night, and then he said a prayer just three words long—*God help us!* and pulling off his coat he hastened to the nearest boat drawn up on the beach. It was a strong craft, adapted to heavy seas, but, alas! it wanted several pairs of hands to man it. When the parson set the example, first one and then another fisherman joined him, till, in a few minutes, the crew was complete.

'Not you, John,' he said, as a middle-aged man came up to volunteer; 'not you, you have nine motherless children.'

The women hushed their cries to watch the boat as it tossed about on the cruel sea with that pale, eager-eyed man as guiding-spirit of the crew, but it was only by gleams of moonlight now and then that they saw that the vessel had been safely reached and a terrible hour of suspense passed before a cry of great joy rose up from the beach, and strong men staggered into the arms of their wives and mothers.

All safe, not one missing, and the crew of the *Queen of the Wave* safe too!

But where was the clergyman with his eager voice and ready hand? Down in the boat, lying helpless and senseless. While there was work to be done he had done it, encouraged the men when they seemed disheartened, and prayed for them when the sea seemed going to swallow them up. Mr. Mayne was not dead, but he never recovered the effects of that night's work, and three months later little Giles came crying away from the parsonage door. There was no more need to ask whether the sick man had passed a quiet night—all was quiet and peace for him now, he was gone to the land where there is no more sea.

One spring evening a knot of fishermen on the beach were in close conversation, little Giles Morton among them, holding his father by the hand. 'We can't forget him, he saved our lives,' said Morton, 'but we 'd like to do somewhat to show folk how we loved him; what could we do? he 's got no kith nor kin, he said himself, that we could do aught for.'

'I 'll tell you what to do,' said little Giles, 'put a picture window in the church; he liked 'em, he told me so; they make God's house beautiful, and mind us of good things when our eyes wander.'

Little Giles used almost Mr. Mayne's own words as he had spoken them to the children of the village school.

The plan pleased the poor fishermen, who at once set on foot a collection for the purpose, Giles bringing, with tears in his eyes, a new half-crown that the parson himself had given him last year. With a little help from the scattered gentry round who had known Mr. Mayne, the sum needed was collected, and then came the question of the subject for the memorial window. Only one thing the fisher-folk were bent on—it must have to do with the sea.

So Christ stilling the waves was chosen, and the Sunday after the stained glass was put in, Lyndon Church was full to overflowing. After service a little crowd gathered under the window, which was glowing in the evening sun, and fathers told their children the story of their brave clergyman, who had showed them the greatest love that one man could show to another by laying down his life for them.

All the village was there, babes in arms, old men, and little Giles in the front row, trying hard to keep back his tears, for had not the new clergyman told them in his sermon that Mr. Mayne was happier now than he had ever been in life, up in that blue heaven which made so beautiful an arch over the green graves? H. A. F.

THE JEALOUS SISTERS.

(*Continued from page* 43.)

AND so she continued lamenting over her sister's fainting form, until, to her great relief, she saw her parents hurrying towards them. The runaway horse could

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not be stopped for some distance, notwithstanding all their father's endeavours, until a countryman, crossing the road, bravely grasped at the reins, and thus checked the frightened animal. Immediately the father sprang from the carriage, and rushed back to his children, followed by their anxious mother. Harriet had shown some signs of returning life by the time her parents arrived, aud was gently raised by her father's strong arm, and carried to the nearest house, from whence, as soon as possible, she was conveyed home. A doctor was at once sent for, who pronounced her state to be most dangerous, and said the only hope for her life was care and the strictest quiet. Helen watched by her sister's bedside for many days, and nursed her tenderly, and truly thankful she was to hear the first tones of the invalid's voice, weak and tremulous as it was; for she had endured great agony of mind when believing that voice was hushed for ever. Those bitter moments of self-accusation and grief had left an impression upon her memory which it was impossible to efface.

As to Harriet, the unexpected tenderness and affection which she found in her sister during her illness produced such a change upon her, that she now loved Helen truly and fondly, and grieved at the remembrance of the unkind feelings she had formerly felt towards her. Thus this accident, which had at first caused so much suffering and anxiety, in the end drew two hearts together, and united them in peace and love, leaving no room for those jealousies which had formerly embittered their young lives.

Harriet soon recovered her usual health and strength, and enjoyed more happiness than she had ever done before.

In about a week the long-promised party was to take place, and meantime Aunt Lucy paid her nieces a visit. 'Helen and Harriet,' she said, 'I wish to speak to you both. I am sure you have heard of the treat I propose giving all my young friends. My first intention was not to have asked either of you, because I have very little room; and had I invited one the other would have said, "Am I to go too?" and I thought it better not to create jealousy. However, I have changed my mind. I have one place to spare, and now you shall decide for yourselves which is to have it.'

Without a moment's hesitation, Harriet answered,—'Aunt Lucy, take Helen: she would like to go: and you know she has nursed me so well, that a day's amusement will do her a great deal of good.'

'No, no, aunt!' exclaimed Helen; 'it is Harriet's turn; remember, I was staying with you before, and had such a pleasant time. Please take her; I would much rather she went.'

'My dear children,' replied Aunt Lucy, with a smile, 'I think I must manage to pack you both in, that it may be a double pleasure. I may now tell you it was because I found you jealous, selfish little girls, that I would not have you for companions to my grandchildren. And now when I proposed to take one or the other of you to the party, and left the choice to yourselves, I wished to try if you were still as unkind as ever; and most truly do I rejoice to find that God has changed your hearts, and turned them to love one another.'

At length the long-wished-for day arrived, and a happier party never set off on a pleasure expedition; nor were their expectations disappointed, for a happier day, perhaps, never was spent. There was brightness and sunshine on all around, as well as within the hearts of the children.

S. T. A. R.

THE LITTLE DAIRY-MAID.

SHE woke with the birds this morning,
When the sun was rising bright,
And she 's churning now in the glimmer
Of the waning evening light.
She made the cheese in the dairy;
She watched the cows in the lane;
She 's active and light as a fairy,
Our little dairy-maid Jane.

To-morrow she 'll go to market,
O'er hill, and meadow, and down—
In her white sun-bonnet and kerchief,
And tidy purple gown—

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The Little Dairymaid.

With eggs, and fruit, and butter,
Which brings her a wide renown;
And she sells them to the gentry,
In yonder market town.

Still, as she churns, her singing,
Like song of a woodland bird,
Thro' the open lattice window
All cheerfully is heard.
I know not which is sweetest,
The carol of birds in the lane,
Or the notes that I love so dearly,
Of little dairy-maid Jane.

MRS. HAWTREY.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. V.] MAY, 1870. [One Penny.

Mother's Story

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MOTHER'S STORY.

WHEN I was a little girl of six years old, I lived with your grandfather and grandmother in a large house in the country. Round the house there were plantations, and such beautiful lawns, as smooth as velvet. Below this lawn there was a sheet of water; we called it a fish-pond; we had swans on it which were tame and used to waddle up the lawn to the room-windows for scraps of bread or anything we chose to give them; in winter-time they would let us warm our hands in their beautiful soft down. Besides the swans, there were ducks and water-hens, and a sea-gull, too; but the things I took most interest in were what we used to call bull-heads; they were funny little creatures, quite black, with nothing but a head and tail; they used to become little frogs in time. Tadpoles, I think, is the proper name for them, but 'bull-heads' was the name by which *we* always called them. These little creatures used to be in the pond by hundreds, and they used to swim about, wagging their little tails all the time. I was very fond of catching these bull-heads; I used to put them into bottles, to see if I could watch them grow into frogs; the poor things, however, generally died before that happened. Once I remember seeing four little legs appearing, but the bull-head died before the tail dropped off and it really became a frog.

It was very dangerous for a child of my age to stoop over the edge of the pond, for it was deep in some places, and would have drowned a man easily. Everywhere it was deep enough to drown a child of my size; so my father and mother forbade my ever going alone to the pond. The bull-heads, however, were a sore temptation, and sometimes I could not resist going to catch them when I thought there was a good chance.

I was punished in many ways, and still I went; till at last my father said, 'Now, Mary, the very next time I know of your being by yourself at the pond, I'll put you in.'

For some time the fear of this punishment kept me from disobeying; but at last the fear wore off, and I began to think that father really could not mean to put me in, for he would spoil all my clothes, and it might give me cold; it must be only to frighten me that he said it.

One day I was playing on the lawn whilst my father and mother and elder sisters were at dinner. The dining-room windows looked on to the grass and pond; but it was a very sunny day and the blinds were down. I thought what a capital chance it was to go and have a peep at the bull-heads; for no one would get up to look out at dinner-time; and, besides, the blinds were drawn down.

I made up my mind that I would only have a look, and then come back. I did hear a voice whispering to me not to go, for it was wrong to do so; but I took no notice, and only listened to the tempter. I set off down the grass, through the gate at the bottom of the lawn, and then I peeped round to see if I had been noticed. I saw no one, and the blinds were still down. On I went, up the bank to the pond. Oh! what crowds of bull-heads were there, close to the edge of the water. I forgot all fears, and was soon down on my knees trying to catch some of them in my hand. Just as I was in the midst of my enjoyment, I heard footsteps behind me; I looked round in a great fright, and there, a few steps behind me, was my father. I tried to rise from my knees, but he prevented me, and took me up in his strong arms and dipped me in the water, clothes and all.

For some time I did nothing but sob, the water was so cold; and when I could recover my voice, I began to scream lustily. My cries soon brought nurse down, who came running and calling out, 'Oh, sir, how cruel of you!'

'Hush, nurse,' said my father; 'you don't know what you are talking about.

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Take her clothes off and put her to bed. You can give her a cup of hot tea.'

Nurse did as she was bid; and when I was in bed and had drunk the tea, my father came up to me.

'Mary,' said he, 'nurse called me cruel; perhaps you think I am cruel as well.'

I did not speak, so my father went on.

'Suppose I had left you to do as you liked, and suppose the bank had given way, as it sometimes has done; and suppose, also, that you had fallen in, no one being near to help you: what would have happened?'

'I should have been drowned,' said I.

'Well, Mary, *was* I cruel? Was I to let my little girl disobey me, and run the chance, too, of being drowned, without trying to prevent such a terrible thing?'

'Oh, papa,' said I, 'I'll never go again, and you were not cruel. Do forgive me, papa, this once, and indeed I'll not disobey you any more.'

'Of course I will forgive you, my darling,' said my father; 'but remember this: fear of punishment ought not to be the reason for your obeying me. I want my little girl to keep from disobedience, and every other kind of sin, because she knows it to be wrong, and not because it brings punishment. Remember, too, that when I or your mother give you any orders, we have a good reason for doing so. You must say to yourself, "I won't do it, for they know best;" and if the temptation be very strong, you must pray to God to help you to fight against it, and I am sure you will succeed.'

My father then kissed me, and I need hardly tell you that I never again went to the pond by myself to catch bull-heads; indeed I took rather a dislike to them, for they always reminded me of my cold bath.

A CHILD'S MUSINGS ABOUT DUTY.

WHY should I be cross
When I'm called to bed?
Should I not be glad
To lay my little head
Down upon my pillow,
Soft and smooth and white,
There to rest in comfort,
Through the live-long night?

Baby-boy is wiser
Than his elder brother!
He always *leaves off* crying
When put to bed by mother.
How is it that the baby
Is wiser far than I?
How is it that the baby
Just then should stop his cry?
Does he really know
What I do so forget?
It's best of all to do
Just what we are set,—
To go to bed at bed-time,
To get up when we're told,
To breakfast at the right time,
And bear the water cold.

Be silent when we should,
And when we may to talk;
In to say our task,
And *out* to take a walk,
To bear it when we're scolded,
To love, and learn, and play,
Are little children's duties,
Through the live-long day.

J. E. C. F.

NOTHING TO THANK GOD FOR.

A LITTLE girl did not want to pray when she was going to bed. I do not like to tell you her true name, so I will call her Helen.

'Have you nothing to thank God for?' asked her mother.

'No,' said Helen; 'you and father give me everything.'

'Not for your pleasant home?' asked her mother.

'It is my father's house; he lets me live in it.'

'Where did the wood come from to build it?' asked her mother.

'From trees,' answered Helen; 'and they grew in big forests.'

'Who planted the big forest? Who

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A child's musings about duty. Page 67.

gave rain to water them? Who gave the sun to warm them? Who did not let the winter kill them, nor the lightning blast them? Who kept them growing from little trees big enough to build houses with? Not father, not any man; it was God.'

Helen looked at her mother, and then said,—

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'Nothing to thank God for.'

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'Father bought nails to make it with.'

'What are nails made of?' asked the mother.

'Iron,' answered Helen; 'and men dig iron out of the ground.'

'Who put iron in the ground, and kept it there safe till the men wanted it?' asked the mother. 'It was God.'

'We got this carpet from the carpet-men,' said Helen, drawing her foot across it.

'Where did the carpet-men get the wool to make it from?' asked the mother.

'From farmers,' answered Helen.

'And where did the farmers get it?'

'From sheep and lambs' backs,' said the little girl.

'And who clothed the lambs in dresses good enough for us? for your dress, I see, is made of nothing but lambs' wool. The best thing we can get is their cast-off dresses. Where did the lambs get such good stuff?'

'God gave it to them, I suppose,' said the little girl. 'It is you that gives me bread, mother,' said she quickly.

'But,' said her mother, 'the flour we got from the shopkeeper, and he bought it from the miller: and the miller took the wheat from the farmer; and the farmer had it from the ground: did the ground grow it all itself?'

'No,' cried Helen suddenly; 'God grew it. The sun and the rain, the wind and the air, are His, and He sent them to the cornfield. The earth is His too. And so God is at the bottom of everything; isn't He, mother?'

'Yes,' said the mother; 'God is the Giver of every good and perfect gift which we enjoy.'

The little girl looked serious; she was thinking. 'Then, mother,' she said at last, 'I can't make a prayer long enough to thank God for everything.'

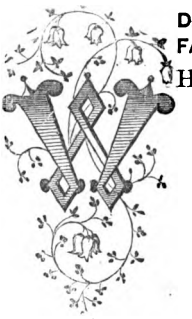
'And have you nothing to ask His forgiveness for?' asked the little girl's mother.

'Yes,' she said in a low tone; 'for not feeling grateful, and for trying to put Him out of my thoughts.'

Helen never after that refused to say her prayers.

SCENES IN LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID'S CARE FOR HIS FATHER AND MOTHER.



WHEN David left Nob, believing himself to be no longer safe anywhere in Israel, he fled to the land of Philistines and took refuge with king Achish who held his court at Gath, and who, like all the kings of the Philistines bore also the name of Abimelech. It was a bold act to go for protection to the bitterest foes of Israel and to the very birthplace of Goliath, whose sword David was now wearing for his defence, but it was also a sinful act, showing, like his behaviour at Nob, that for the time David distrusted God's power to protect him from the enmity of Saul.

The Philistine king was inclined to show kindness to David, but the servants of Achish did not think it right that their master should shelter the man who had slain their hero, Goliath, and defeated their army, and who was now talked of as likely to become the king of Israel. Before long David heard them say one to another, '*Is not this David, the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?"*' David must have been dismayed to find that the Philistines knew so well what had been said about him in his own land, and he must at once have felt how great was the danger in which he had placed himself by coming among them.

As at Nob he had deceived Abimelech by *telling* lies, so now he escaped by what was equally sinful, he *acted* a lie. Knowing that people who had lost their reason were looked upon with awe and treated with kindness, David pretended to be mad, and by this device he saved his life, but he had to depart from Gath because he was now regarded by Achish as a troublesome, useless person.

It was good for him that he was driven

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from Gath, for it showed him the folly of trusting to his own clever contrivances, and he returned to Judah in a far different spirit from that in which he had quitted it. He got back his trust in the power and mercy of God, and felt deep sorrow at the remembrance of his sinful conduct at Nob and at Gath. This we find from the thirty-fourth and the fifty-sixth Psalms, which were both composed by the repentant David, after his deliverance from Gath, as we learn from the headings they have in the Bible.

Not daring to enter any town for fear of Saul, David now took shelter in the Cave of Adullam, one of the dry caverns which abound in the limestone rocks that lie between Bethlehem and the Dead Sea. This cave, the largest of them all, was well suited for his purpose, and no doubt he had often explored it in the days when he fed his flock on the hills above. It could only be approached by a very steep path along the side of the cliff, and the entrance was a long, narrow, winding passage, which could easily be defended against any enemy who might assail him there. During his lonely days in this gloomy hiding-place, David seems to have composed the one hundred and forty-second Psalm, which, as the title tells us, was '*a prayer when he was in the cave.*'

But it was not long that he dwelt alone. As Bethlehem was only about six miles distant, he contrived to let his family know the place of his retreat, and soon he was joined by his parents and other relatives from whom he had for some time been separated. Then there came to him no less than four hundred men who placed themselves under his command; not that David was a rebel against the king, but rather a chieftain, whose men formed a guard to defend him against a cruel and powerful enemy. Never once did David and his men disturb the peace of the country, but they helped to preserve it by checking more than one attack of the Philistines.

A cavern in the hill-side was no fit place for the abode of David's aged parents, and yet it was not safe for them to return to Bethlehem so long as Saul was enraged with David, and, on his own account, with all who belonged to him. He therefore determined to convey them across the Jordan to Mizpeh, the capital city of the land of Moab, and to place them under the protection of the king. The Moabites worshipped the monstrous idol-god Baal-peor, and were frequently at war with Israel. This at first leads us to think it strange that David should choose such a home for his parents, but we must remember that, if they went out of Saul's dominions at all, they would have to dwell among worshippers of false gods. Then, too, from the Book of Ruth, we know that Ruth, the grandmother of David's father, Jesse, was a Moabitess. It is likely, therefore, that Jesse had still some relations in Moab, and even if all his kindred were dead, he and his wife might hope to meet with hospitable treatment there. David might have sent his parents under the care of some of his men with a message to the king of Moab, but he was too good a son to trust their safety to others so long as he could protect them himself. Venturing forth from the cave, '*David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab, and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.*' (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.) Holy Scripture does not tell us whether they lived to see their son king in Saul's stead, or whether they ever saw him again after he bade them farewell in Mizpeh.

We all know that the Church catechism explains the fifth commandment, '*Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,*' by telling us that our duty to our parents is 'to love, honour, and succour' them. The word 'succour' means to help; and in this story from David's life, children may see how he kept the commandment by succouring his parents in their old age. Many are the little every-day ways in which children can help their parents, and specially they can do so by strict obedience to their wishes, trying when out of sight to be and to do just what they would if their father or mother were watching them all the time. And when they have grown up, they

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David's Care for his Father and Mother.

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Raining Gold.

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ought never to think themselves too old or too busy to study their parents' comfort and happiness, nor allow themselves to believe that they are unable to help in supporting their aged parents, should they need such assistance. Quite young children can *learn first to show piety* (kindness) *at home*, but it is especially when grown up that sons and daughters should *requite their parents* (1 Tim. v. 4), that is, pay them back as much as possible for the tender love received from them in early years.

RAINING GOLD.

LITTLE Harry was looking out of the window, watching the rain as it pattered down on the green grass and bent the flower-heads, dancing away over the gravel, and making little pools wherever there was the least pretence of a basin. It is a pleasant thing to sit snug in your comfortable room and watch the rain; but Harry's brain was busy with another thought.

'O Aunt Susan,' he said, his bright eyes sparkling, 'how I wish it would rain gold coins instead of rain-drops! Wouldn't we be rich?'

'What if it *should* rain gold instead of water-drops all summer?'

'Why, we could have everything in the world we wished for then. I would buy a little carriage and harness for Carlo, and Annie should have the paint-box she wants so much, and mother would not need to work a bit, and I would get her a sewing-machine. Oh, how good it would be, auntie!'

'But what would you get to eat? Nothing can grow without water.'

'Oh, we would buy our food; we should have money enough.'

'Yes, but if it rained gold all over the world, no one would have any food to sell. All the fields would be parched. The grass would shrink and crumble to dust. The grain could not grow under golden rain. These beautiful shady trees would soon wither and die. There would be no fruit nor vegetables in any one's garden. The little streams, and many of the wells that give refreshment to thousands, would all be dried up, and the men and animals would perish with thirst as well as hunger. Robinson Crusoe thought little of the gold he found in the sea-chest washed ashore on his island, for he could buy nothing with it. Besides, if gold were as plentiful as pebbles, we should value it no higher. Money is of no use except for what it will bring us of the comforts of life. Some one has estimated that every good summer shower is really worth in money many hundreds, and sometimes thousands of pounds. It produces what will bring that amount. We shall always find, dear Harry, the more we think about it, that our Creator has ordered everything a great deal more wisely and better for us than we could do for ourselves.'

JACOB KELLERN.

(*Concluded from p.* 51.)

I HAD some trouble in finding the house, it was in a narrow street in the old town; Jacob's mother made me welcome, but she looked very sad, as that day news had come of a great battle, and perhaps her dear husband might be one of the poor soldiers killed or wounded.

'But what are you all so busy about?' I asked, for all the children from blind Thekla to little Karl were hard at work pulling out the threads of old linen. Perhaps some of you children have busied your little fingers in fraying coarse muslin to fill the fire-place in summer time. Not very easy work, do you say? I daresay not, when the threads break, though they are so coarse, then imagine how much more difficult the little German children's work was, drawing the threads out of fine linen.

'Surely they did not mean to put that in fire-places?'

No, no, it was all to be sent to the poor wounded men, to be used as we do lint.

'This is for my father,' said little Gretchen. I told her I hoped father would not need

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it, that he would come safe home again; but Frau Kellern could only wring her hands and cry, 'Oh, this cruel, cruel war!'

'But where was Jacob?'

'Gone out on his afternoon round with water for the hotels,' his mother said, and here I found I had touched on the right subject to cheer her; she told me what a good steady boy Jacob was, how hard he had worked since his father went away, how gentle he was to the little ones, and how regular in bringing home all he earned, 'And thank you many times, ma'am,' added the poor woman, 'for the nice fresh eggs and new milk for Lieschen; I do believe they have kept her alive the last week;' and she pointed to a corner of the room where lay a poor, sickly-looking little girl whom I had not seen before.

'Fresh eggs and new milk! I don't know what you mean.'

'Oh, yes, Fraulein, Jacob has brought them every morning for the last week, and when I asked him where he got them, he said it was all through your kindness; if you did not send them, oh, where could he have got them?—I know he is an honest lad, he would never steal.'

'Don't doubt the little boy's honesty, very likely some one gave them to him.'

Bidding them good-bye, I started for home; I could not help feeling rather uneasy; what if my little friend turned out not to be straightforward? But when I recalled his honest, open face, and clear bright eyes, I could not believe ill of him.

My thoughts had been so taken up with the poor woman's troubles that I quite forgot the affair of the boots and hat. Suddenly I remembered it, and then light began to break in upon the story, and after a minute's thought my mind was quite made up.

'Bravo, Jacob! then I was not deceived in you!'

How was it, do you ask? Wait a minute and Jacob shall tell you himself. I was quite impatient for five o'clock to come. Punctually, as usual, there was the little lad ready with the chair. I called him, told him of my visit, for he had not been home since, and said what his mother had told me of the good things he had got for Lieschen. He turned very red and said, 'O Fraulein, do forgive me, but I really could do without the things you gave me, and Lieschen did so want some nicer food, so I sold them and spent the money. O Fraulein, I hope it was not wrong.'

'But why did you not tell me what you had done?'

'You might think I meant to beg, Fraulein,' said the child, with true delicacy.

'Why did you not tell your mother, Jacob? You made her think I sent the food. What did you tell her?'

'Mother might have told me not to sell the things, and it was such a pleasure to see Lieschen enjoy her breakfasts; besides, Fraulein, it was true; I could never have got them but for you.'

Brave, unselfish little Jacob, I wish there were more like you. I felt inclined to give him three cheers, and you would have joined me; would you not, if you had been there?

I was called back to England suddenly the next day. Hurried as I was, I made time to call on Frau Kellern, Jacob was out, so I never bade my little friend good-bye, but I left a parcel for him, and I think you can guess what was inside. And Lieschen was not forgotten, for my friend left some money to buy her milk and eggs all through the summer. I never heard, and I daresay never shall, if Jacob's father fell in that terrible battle of Sadowa, but of this I am sure, Frau Kellern will never want a helper while God spares her her brave, unselfish little son.

WHAT THEY FOUND IN THE CLOISTERS.

'WHEN do you think father and mother will be home, Mina?' asked a little girl of seven years old, of one of seventeen.

'About six o'clock, I should think; but, dearest, you are wearing yourself out with impatience; they cannot be here for three or four hours, so try to do something, and that will

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make the time pass. Shall we go a walk, or should not you like to go to the cloisters and sing over the anthem for to-morrow?'

Lilla, the little one, pouted and answered crossly, 'I don't want to do either, Cousin Mina, and I can't help being impatient; they are my own father and mother, who have been away eight whole weeks. I daresay you don't mind so much, because they do not belong to you.'

This was a very naughty, unkind speech of little Lilla's, as you will see when I have told you some of the history of 'Cousin Mina.' She was no real cousin of Lilla's, though she was called so.

Fifteen years before, a shipwreck had taken place on the sea-coast close by Lilla's home. Many dead bodies were washed on shore, and one little living child, tied carefully on a raft, also reached the land. It only just breathed, and would soon have died of cold and hunger, but kind Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn, who had then no child of their own, took care of it, and brought it up. It seemed about two years old, and wore clothes marked M. S. The only words it could say were 'papa' and 'Mina,' the latter word it seemed to intend for its own name, so they called it Mina. When it was ten years old, their own little Lilla was born, but still they loved their adopted child as much as ever. No one during those ten years had claimed her, though Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn had made many inquiries, feeling sure that if the little girl had relatives living, they must be very anxious about her fate.

Now you see why it was cruel and unkind of Lilla to remind Mina that she had no father or mother.

Lilla did not mean to hurt Mina's feelings, and when she saw the tears in her eyes she rushed to her and kissed her, and said, 'Don't, don't, I didn't mean it,' and Mina tried to smile, and they were friends again.

Then Lilla said quite pleasantly, 'Let us go to the cloisters, I would like to sing the anthem.'

They lived near a beautiful Abbey Church, and Mina liked to sing in the cloisters where it was always cool in summer and sheltered in winter.

Just now it was spring-time, and the Easter decorations were still there, making the Cathedral look bright and cheerful.

Lilla took an anthem-book too, for she liked to follow the words while Mina sang. The anthem was that beautiful one—'Oh, rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him.' Mina had a sweet voice, and Lilla liked to listen to it; so did some strangers who were just then going over the Cathedral guided by the old verger. Mina did not hear their footsteps as they entered the cloister at the other end, but when she had finished they came quietly up to her; and one, a pleasant-looking gentleman of about forty, looked so fixedly at her, that she felt quite surprised and dropped her book. He picked it up for her, and seemed to wish to speak to her, for he said, 'Excuse me, but are you?——' and then he stopped, bowed, and followed the verger into the Cathedral. Two minutes later he came out again looking very much agitated. 'Do not think me strange,' he said, 'I know I ought to wait till Mr. Selwyn returns, but—but I feel sure I know some friends of yours.'

'Friends of mine!' said Mina, smiling, 'I have no friends, I am not really a Miss Selwyn.'

She was sorry for the gentleman, who seemed so confused, and wished to put him at his ease. The next moment it was her turn to be agitated, for the stranger said, 'But, indeed, you have friends, you must—you must be little Marina Sefton who was wrecked fifteen years ago in the *Good Speed*. I thought,—I mean your friends thought,—indeed they heard it on good authority,—that every soul perished.'

Then Mina, who was trembling all over, said softly, 'Who are you? please tell me?' But the gentleman could not speak; it was little Lilla who said, 'It is your father, Mina; and oh! how good that he should come home the same day I have my own father and mother!'

And it was Mina's father, who had mourned her as dead for fifteen years.

He gave Mr. Selwyn that evening such an account of himself as made him feel sure that Mina was indeed his lost child. He told Mr. Selwyn that he was first struck

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by her voice as so much resembling that of his wife who had been a beautiful singer, but who had died at Mina's birth.

Mr. Sefton was a South American merchant, and when his little girl was two years old, he had sent her to England with some friends, because the hot climate made her ill; he meant to follow in a year or two, but the news of the loss of the ship and all on board so grieved him, that it was many years before he cared to think of returning to his native country. Little did he think that within a few weeks of so doing he should recover his lost child, and in such a remarkable manner. His first glimpse of Mina in the cloister confirmed the impression her voice had produced; she was, indeed, singularly like the young wife he had lost years ago: so he asked the verger who the young lady was, and heard a story which convinced him that she was indeed his own child.

Mr. Selwyn was grieved to lose his first child, as he fondly called Mina, but he was glad to find that Mr. Sefton meant to live in England for the future, and promised to buy a house near them. H. A. F.

TWO CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

(*Continued from p.* 60.)

A FEW wished to speak to her alone; she asked them into the kitchen, and then it was as follows:—

'Miss, I bring you a fat goose for Christmas.'

'Miss, a couple of bushels of potatoes from my last crop, you have so many to provide for.'

'Miss, a keg of honey, all your sick folk will lick their lips after it.'

'Miss, a bagful of dried fruit, you will know how to use it better than any one else.'

Maria was now thirty years old, but her joy was still like that of a child. With eyes full of tears, and with a smiling face, she thanked them all.

'What will my brother say this evening, oh, what will Hans say?'

Now she hastened to have an important consultation with him in his room.

'Hans, Frau Soro is so very bad, the cancer is spreading, she must be attended to, her servant ran away yesterday; I beg of you, Hans, let me go to her to-day.'

'Impossible, it cannot be, the roads are deep in snow; it is neither possible for carriages nor for sledges to get there.'

'That I know, but on horseback it can be done; let me ride there.'

'In this biting cold! with this terrible wind blowing too!'

'Hans, I must go to-day to Frau Soro,' implored Maria.

'Well, then, walk or ride in God's name, my dear sister.'

Soon after we see Maria mount her horse, before her she holds a basket, her eyes are beaming with pleasure. She is very fond of riding, she says it always does her good both in body and soul. She is a skilful horsewoman too; the situation of Samari is such that many cottages in the mountains can only be reached on horseback. After a sharp ride of about an hour and a half, which has made both horse and rider warm, she alights at the farm of Frau Soro, the same woman with whom the children passed such a wretched time after the death of their mother. Here everything was changed now. The house, the rooms, the kitchen—all looked, if possible, more uncomfortable than formerly. The farmer was dead, a servant managed the farm under the eye of the widow. But that eye no longer kept things in order, and those hands could no longer work. A terrible disease had some time ago seized the farmer's widow—cure is impossible—one can only pray that the poor woman may be released from her sufferings,—but, but,—will death release her, will it not rather bring her still heavier sufferings? She does not believe in Jesus. What will then be her fate after this life? Who can save her from the wrath to come, from everlasting fire?

Maria approached the sick bed. The room is terribly close, no nurse could remain long at that bedside. Maria let in some fresh air, washed and dressed the

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poor woman, lifted her into a clean bed, then opened her basket and gave her some light food; whilst thus attending to her with her hands, kind words came from her lips, and though Frau Soro scarcely replied, one could see how well all these acts of love pleased her.

'Do not go away from me, do stay here,' she begged. 'Lisa is gone away again, she could not endure my screams.'

'Good woman, I cannot stay, too many are waiting for me at home. But it is terrible here; why will you not come to us altogether, we will nurse you, and I will be often with you?'

'I will tell you something,' said the woman; 'I will come, for here every one is robbing me. I have now let the farm to William, so I shall be able to come to you.'

'Oh, how glad I am,' said Maria heartily; 'that is a regular Christmas treat for me, that you should be willing to come to us.'

What ground had she for joy? A miserly, wicked old woman, who had never shown her any love, who was suffering from such a loathsome disease that no one could remain with her, who could not be put in the same room with others, and for whom therefore Maria must give up her own room. This woman came to Werner's house, and they were rejoiced at it; how came this? Because they loved the Lord Jesus, and for His sake loved this old woman too.

Now Maria knelt down by the bedside, and prayed to God for a Christmas blessing for this poor sick woman, begged Him to enter into her dark heart and take up His abode there. She prayed in faith and doubted not.

'If any one will make me good, it will be you,' said Frau Soro, and wept.

'No, oh no! not I, but God can and will do so, if you will only ask Him,' answered Maria.

Now she is again sitting on her horse, it is nearly noon. She cannot help it, she must go out of her way a little, she must take the road which that day twenty-four years ago, she went with her brother. Then everything was so dark around them, now everything is so bright and clear. She clasped her hands: 'Oh, Thou hast done all things, all things well, how can I thank Thee enough.'

Maria rode on further, and soon she stood before Dr. Neuring's house; a cheerful welcome greeted her. The good doctor and his wife, still fresh and strong, were surrounded by their children, who had all assembled to spend Christmas at home.

'And is it not possible then, can you not spend this evening with us?' asked the mother.

'Dearest mother, indeed it cannot be,' replied Maria, 'it would grieve our people and our sick patients so much. We must spend our Christmas with them.'

'Well, then, come early to-morrow morning and we will light up the tree again.'

'If God will, we certainly will come to-morrow, and are looking forward to it with delight,' answered Maria.

But no one has much time to spare on Christmas day. Maria soon took leave, but not without whispering to the mother, 'Do you remember this day twenty-four years ago?'

'Blessed be the day upon which God directed your steps hitherward,' said the mother.

When Maria came home her brother had gone across the country to visit some patients. Thus she had time to make some preparations for the evening. Maria had a large family to provide for, in one room there were many sick children, in another several sick grown-up people,—what then was the beginning of this hospital?

It had always been Maria's custom to visit her brother's poor patients and help them when she could. Once a poor sempstress lay ill, she had neither father, mother, brother, nor sister, no friend nursed her in her sufferings, she was quite alone. Dr. Werner sought in vain for a nurse in the little Samari. Maria was much with her, but she could not always be there, brother and sister then made the unselfish resolve to take the poor person themselves; for what end had God given them such a comfortable house but to use it in His service? When now the first patient was installed in a good soft bed there, Maria declared that one girl could nurse six just as well as one,—there were plenty of sufferers whom the doctor

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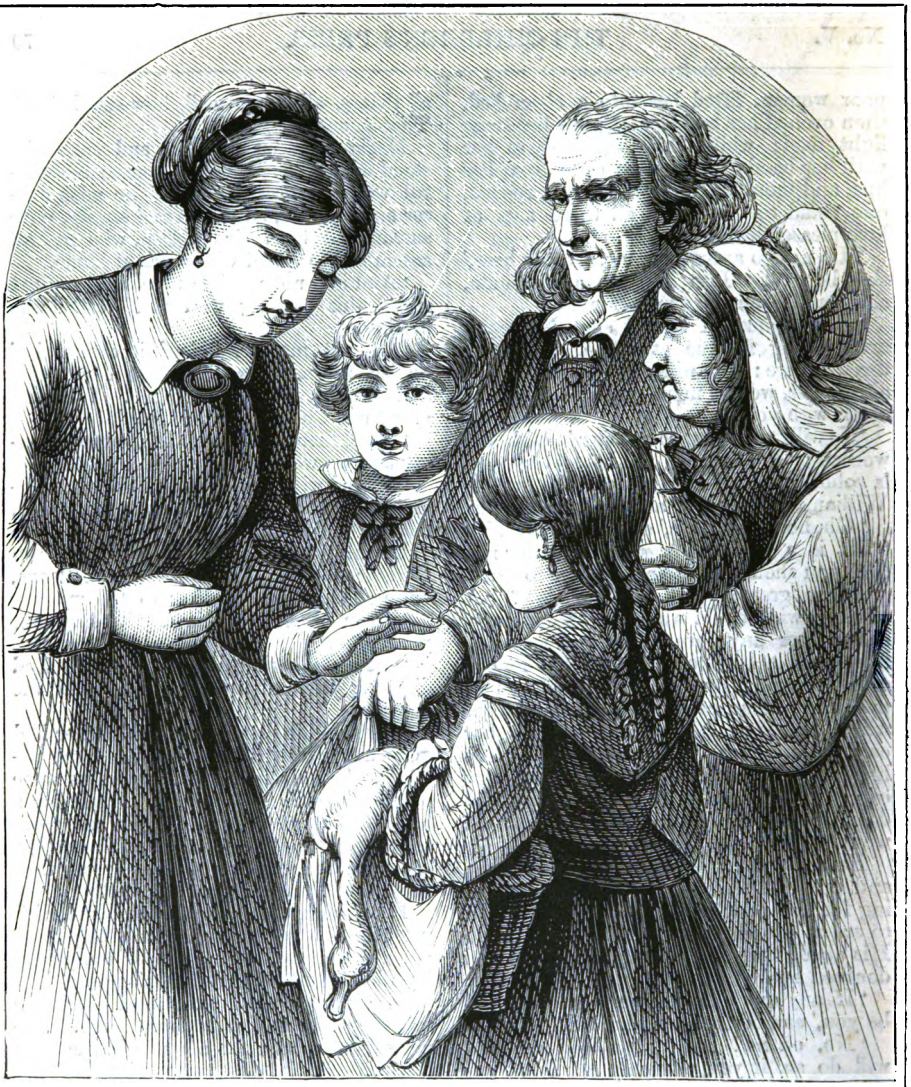

could not help in their own dwellings,—these, one after another, came to his house, for where could a sick person be better off than at the doctor's?

Thus the two rooms which the doctor had set apart as an hospital were speedily filled, and when God saw how earnestly brother and sister strove to keep the command of loving their neighbour as themselves, He fulfilled His promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'

(*Concluded in our next.*)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

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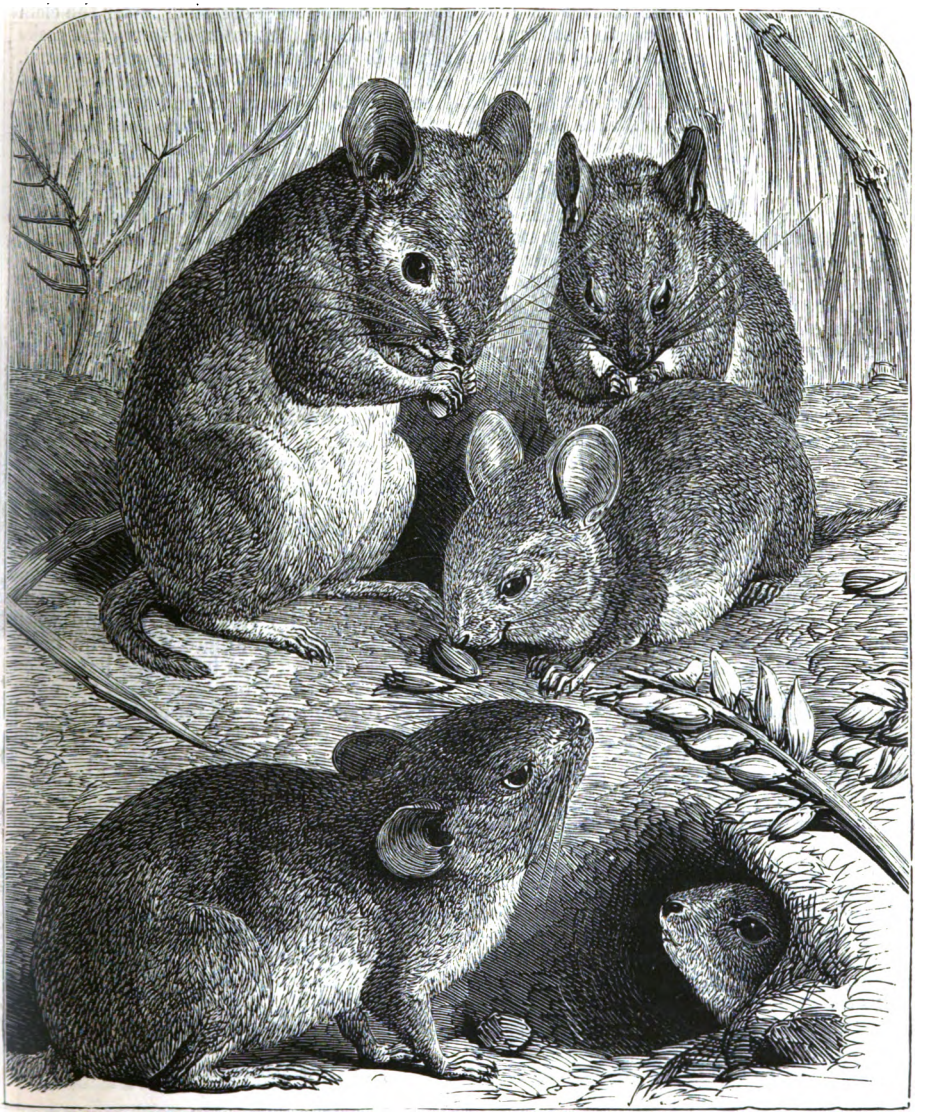

Field Mice, by F. W. KEYL.

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'PRIM,' MY PET FIELD-MOUSE.

ONE of the little creatures whose picture is given this month was found by a young lady as she was walking on Primrose Hill, and so was named 'Prim.' He was a tiny field-mouse, and must have been very young then, for instead of running away, or seeming at all frightened, he looked up at her with a winning little twinkle in his eye, as much as to say, 'You won't hurt me; will you?' And though she let him drop out of her handkerchief twice before she got home, yet he remained quite still, and let himself be picked up again each time without giving any trouble.

The young lady gave him to her sister as a present, and she made a great pet of Prim, and has written down some of his tricks and deeds, which we give almost in her own words.

'On the day that Prim was given to me, the only cage I had to put him in was one in which some birds had been brought from India, made of very thin slips of cane. In the first night of his captivity Prim made short work of his prison; he nibbled through one or two of the little bars of this cage, jumped, or more probably tumbled, off the sideboard, on which the cage had been set, and in the morning he was nowhere to be found, and for some time we feared he was really lost, it was so difficult to discover such a wee thing in a furnished room at all.

'The second night we thought to make all sure by wrapping the cage firmly round with some baize, but the device was a complete failure. In the morning Prim was gone again, and we had a worse hunt than on the day before. After finding him I very soon got a wire-cage, made with a "round-about" in it for him to take his "constitutional" in.

'Before long he became very tame, and would sit quietly for a while in my lap or hand, or take little excursions up to my shoulder. We used often to let him run about the table after meals before the cloth was taken away, and it was amusing to see him inspect such dishes or fragments as might be left.

'It was on such occasions, after the cloth was removed, that we used to try and make friends of Prim and Scug the squirrel. Prim was always delighted, and most anxious to be sociable, and would run behind the squirrel, examine his tail with great admiration, and even try to get on his back; but Scug was not at all so well pleased, indeed he seemed quite frightened, and the interview generally ended by the squirrel's jumping off the table and hiding under the sofa.

'Prim gave two of our servants a great fright one night. They slept in a room underneath the drawing-room, and there Prim happened to have been left on that occasion. The servants came up to father's room about one o'clock, saying that they were sure somebody was breaking in; they could hear a regular noise, just like the sawing of the wood of the window-shutter overhead, which ceased if they made any noise, to be resumed again as soon as all was quiet. Father guessed what the real cause was; but as he does not believe much in house-breakers, he got up, put on slippers and dressing-gown, and went downstairs very quietly; and when he opened the door, there was Prim in his cage, which had been by chance left, not on the table as usual, but on a chair, racing in his "roundabout" as if for his very life, and producing exactly the regular sawing sound which had so alarmed the servants.

'Prim was wonderfully fond of his roundabout, and it served a double purpose, for he used it not only for exercise, but also sometimes as a sort of best parlour, and would often fetch his seeds from the part of the cage where his two little troughs stood, and sit cracking the seeds in his "roundabout," as if it were a special treat to eat them there.

'Prim always ate sitting upright, and he was wonderfully clever with his two little fore-paws. His general food was seed; but he enjoyed a bit of cheese. He liked fruit, too, strawberries, gooseberries, and

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dried currants. These last he ate in a very neat way, making a little hole in the top, through which, holding the currant in his paws, he sucked out the contents, leaving the skin a perfectly empty bag, which he then carefully placed on the wooden edge of the cage, just between the bars.

'I used to think Prim one of the most active little creatures possible; but he was beaten hollow when two house-mice were put into his cage, as a little company for him. The house-mice and he were very good friends, and soon followed him into the "round-about," where there was just room for two; but when either of the house-mice got in with Prim, they went at such a pace, that he was utterly confounded, and was obliged at last to give up running, and clutching on to the wires to allow himself to be carried round and round without will or effort.

'I did not inflict these lively visitors on Prim very long, though I am bound to say that he always seemed to be quite content and happy, even when they were sharing his cage, and, indeed, under all circumstances—a little matter in which all readers of the *Prize*, whether young or older, would do well to follow Prim's example.'

THE PRECIOUS LITTLE PLANT.

TWO girls went to the neighbouring town, each carrying on her head a heavy basket of fruit to sell. One murmured and fretted all the way, but the other only joked and laughed. At last one got out of all patience, and said, 'How can you go on laughing so? Your basket is as heavy as mine, and you are not one bit stronger. I don't understand it.'

'O!' said the other, 'it is easy enough to understand. I have a certain little plant that I put on the top of my load, and it makes it so light I hardly feel it.'

'Indeed, it must be a very precious little plant. I wish I could lighten my load with it. Where does it grow? Tell me. What do you call it?'

'It grows,' was the reply, 'wherever you plant it, and give it a chance to take root; and there's no knowing the relief it gives. Its name is *patience*.'

FRITZ'S PRAYER.

FRITZ, go, seek a home with thy uncle Gottfried; it is a long journey, but thou wilt find the way: and listen! if thou art in trouble, pray to God, and He will give thee what thou needest. The good pastor says God loves fatherless children.'

Little Fritz listened attentively to his dying mother's words. That evening a cold, quiet figure lay in the poor little cottage, and Fritz knew that he had no more a mother. He wept bitterly for some time, and then he bethought himself of his mother's last words.

He remembered his uncle Gottfried coming some years ago to the little town in the Black Forest, where Fritz and his parents lived, a tall man, with a loud voice, but not unkind. He recollected that his uncle patted him on the head, and called him a brave boy.

These were pleasant recollections, and Fritz made up his mind to seek his uncle, who lived in a beautiful country, some thirty miles distant, which bore the happy title of the Kingdom of Heaven. Its gentle hills and smiling valleys, and rich soil had gained it that name, situated as it was near to the dark passes and rugged mountains of the Black Forest.

Fritz had lost his father two years before, and now that his mother was dead there was nothing to keep him in the poor little town in which he had been born. The neighbours, too, thought it a good plan that he should seek his rich uncle, so one morning he set out on his journey, with all his small possessions tied in a handkerchief, and carried in his hand. It was summer time, and when Fritz had walked as many miles as he could, being directed along the right road by the many wood-cutters he met, he thought it no hardship to lie down in a sheltered nook in the mountain, and there sleep till daybreak.

Next morning he woke rather stiff and cold, but he ate his last bit of bread, and tried to feel brave still.

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The Precious Plant. Page 83.

'I must be near uncle Gottfried's now,' he thought to himself; but the day wore on, and the summer sun beat hotly on his head, and still a passer-by told him he was many miles from Tischendorf, the village where his uncle lived. He slept that night in the cottage of a poor peasant, who in the morning gave him a piece of black bread and directed him to a short cut through fields and bye-ways towards

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'No, no, I will have no bread.'

his uncle's home. It was kindly meant, but poor little Fritz soon became bewildered, and lost his way. For hours he tried to find out the right path, but he was sick with hunger and fatigue, and the burning sun which poured fiercely down on his bare head, for a sudden gust of wind had blown his hat away into a broad deep river, the day before.

Fritz was only ten years old. After a while he threw himself down on the ground and burst into tears. 'I shall die,' he sobbed; 'I shall never find the Kingdom of Heaven. Oh, that my mother were here!'

The remembrance of his mother brought back to him her last words, and Fritz raised himself up, and joining his hands, said, 'O God, I can travel no further, pray send my uncle Gottfried to me.'

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Then he took a draught from a stream near, and sat patiently by the side of it to wait for his uncle. He was nearly dying of hunger, for he had tasted nothing all day. Presently to his great joy he saw a figure approaching in the distance, but his joy soon changed into bitter grief when he found that it was not his uncle, but a shepherd in search of a missing sheep. He hid his face and sobbed afresh, and the man just looked at him and passed on.

Again his hopes rose, for footsteps approached in another direction. This must surely be uncle Gottfried. A tall man, also dressed in the garb of a shepherd. Fritz felt as if his heart must break. He would hardly listen to the shepherd's questions; and in his heart he said, 'God does not care for fatherless children, and He will not hear my prayers.'

But the shepherd had a kind heart, and insisted on knowing what troubled Fritz so greatly, and at last the boy told him all.

Then the shepherd took a piece of bread and bade Fritz eat it. Fritz was very hungry, but he put it away. 'No, no,' he said, 'I will have no bread, I will have my uncle Gottfried.'

But his friend insisted on his eating it, and said, 'If you do so, I will help you.' So Fritz gave way at last, and ate the roll; and then the shepherd said, 'So you are vexed with the good God because He sent me to you instead of your uncle, and you think He has forgotten to answer your prayer. Ah, people are often foolish, but God is patient;' and he took Fritz's hand and led him over the meadows.

Fritz wondered what it all meant; but hope and a little strength had come back to him since he ate the bread; and then his new friend had such a commanding way with him that he could not help following him. But it was with downcast eyes, for Fritz knew now that he had been impatient and wicked in his thoughts.

Very soon they reached a pretty little cottage. The shepherd walked straight in, still holding Fritz. 'Here, Gottfried, I bring thee a new child,' said he, aloud.

Then Fritz looked up surprised, and saw his uncle sitting in a wooden arm-chair by the window. It was, indeed, his uncle's house, and the shepherd who had found him was his uncle Hans, whom he had never seen before. They welcomed him most gladly, and uncle Gottfried promised he should always live with them.

Fritz is very happy, and now believes that God does answer prayer, though not always in the way we expect, nor as quickly as we poor impatient creatures would have Him do. H. A. F.

SCENES IN LIFE OF DAVID.

THE GALLANT DEED OF THREE OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

NO doubt it required all David's firmness to control his troop of followers, but we must not suppose that they were a lawless band of worthless men, even though we are told that '*every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented*, (or bitter in soul as the word means,) *gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.*' (1 Sam. xxii. 2). Knowing what sort of king Saul was who reigned at the time, we are not surprised to find that under his rule many of the bravest and noblest men in the land were sorely distressed and 'bitter in soul.' Of the debtors, too, the greater part were not to blame for their unhappy condition. A Missionary who has lived for thirty years in the Holy Land, tells us, when writing about this verse, that in Eastern countries in times of misrule, like the reign of Saul, rich families may, even in the present day, be suddenly reduced to the greatest poverty through the extortion of their creditors, who are, in many cases, cold-hearted, cunning money-lenders. Such being the case, we may be sure that in the midst of his own troubles David was comforted by the thought of being able to find a refuge for some of his oppressed fellow-countrymen.

Among the four hundred friends and followers who composed his troop, there were some whose deeds of valour soon made

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them noted above the rest. The names of these mighty men and an account of some of their exploits are given in the twenty-third chapter of the second book of Samuel. The greatest of these men were named Adino (v. 8), Eleazar (v. 9), and Shammah (v. 11, 12). Of the next three we have only the names of two. Abishai (v. 18, 19), who was David's own nephew, and Benaiah (v. 22, 23). Inferior in valour to these but yet of great note were the thirty-one, whose names are given in vv. 24–39. The first of of these, Asahel, was another of David's nephews.

It was, perhaps, whilst David's abode was still in the cave of Adullam, that three of these heroes did a gallant deed.

The Philistines had again invaded the land, perhaps, in order to carry off or destroy the crops which were ripe for harvest, and they had not only pitched their tents in the valley of Rephaim to the south-west of Jerusalem, but had taken possession of Bethlehem and had placed in it a garrison of their soldiers. (2 Sam. xxiii. 13, 14.) We are not told that David and his men attacked them, but it is supposed they did on this occasion, as they had on a former one, mentioned in an earlier chapter (1 Sam. xxiii. 5), and it was very probably in the heat of the battle that the three warriors did their heroic deed. It was a sultry day in harvest-time, and when the faint and weary David saw his native city in the distance, he felt an eager longing for a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem, of which he had often drunk in the days when he led his flock forth to their pasture. In a deep valley on the north-east of Bethlehem there is still a fountain of delicious water, which is thought to be the very one from which he wished to quench his burning thirst. It is a large cistern with several small openings and stands in an enclosure not far from the present village of Beit-lahm.

Uttering aloud his wish, David said, '*Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate.*' (2 Sam. xxiii. 15.) Scarcely had the words passed his lips when the three of his mighty men hastened away to gratify his wish. '*And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David.*' We do not know whether they crept through the host stealthily and were not discovered, or whether, as is more probable, they broke through the ranks so suddenly and so boldly that the astonished Philistines dared not oppose them, but in either case they could hardly expect to return unhurt to their leader. When they carried the water to David his generous heart was so touched by this proof of their devotion and affection, that *he would not drink thereof* because it had been procured at the hazard of their lives, *but he poured it out unto the Lord*, and thus consecrated it as a drink-offering to Him. *And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it.* How great an act of self-denial this was for the weary, thirsty man, we, in our climate and with our plentiful supply of water, can scarcely understand. It was also a proof to his followers that he counted their lives too precious to be endangered for such a purpose on any future occasion, when others, as devoted as they, might wish to follow their example.

These things did these three mighty men, to gratify the wish of their beloved commander. If we were but as desirous of showing our love and devotion to the Lord Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, how joyfully we should seize every opportunity of serving Him, and how ready we should be even to lay down our lives for His sake! The thought then of what the three heroes did for David should fill us with shame when we find ourselves serving our Master with a grudging will, or with a cowardly heart that shrinks from suffering and self-denial in fighting against His enemies and ours—the world, the flesh, and the devil. He is so merciful and loving that, if we have but a willing mind to suffer for Him, He will accept it as if we had in very truth laid down our lives in His cause, and all His good soldiers will have their names preserved in a better record than the list of David's mighty men, even *in the Lamb's book of life.* (Rev. xxi. 27.)

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'He poured it unto the Lord.'

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THE BOAT THAT TOOK BOBBY AWAY.

THERE was once a little girl that opened her eyes with the dawn. To be sure she shut them again, and kept them shut a long time; but they had been quite open, and that in itself was something. When the longer sunbeams came, she remembered the first waking, and wished she had got up in that faint light. However, this was not a little girl to grieve over what could not be helped. She tumbled in and out of her cold bath, pulled on her white socks, put

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her arms through her white petticoat-sleeves, and surrendered herself to the baby's nurse, to tie her strings, hook her frock at the back, and smooth out her light, fair curls. Then, a fresher, simpler little maid never, I suppose, ran downstairs. The breakfast-room to which Nettie ran held a lady and a little boy with fluffy curls and fearless blue eyes.

Nettie ran round the room like a domestic whirlwind, flinging herself into her mother's arms, regardless of the tea-pot, and aiming kisses so heedlessly at Bobby that they mostly fell at the top of his curls.

This was Nettie's first day at the sea-side, and her whole frame was one prepared essence of happiness. Breakfast was altogether too ordinary a subject for her. She would scarcely have been surprised to find the whole room full of singing-birds. What did pass her comprehension, was to see Bobby sitting there opposite, eating stolidly, with the waves plashing out before him, and the sands stretching fair and smooth, waiting, doubtless, till they should come and roughen it with their feet, and dig it into holes with their spades. Scarcely had Bobby despatched his last mouthful, when Nettie's little hands were busy with his coat, and she was dragging him away. But mother stooped to fasten thicker shoes on to Nettie's ankles, before she let the little thing escape.

With the first touch of Nettie's feet on the shingle, she took up authority.

'Look at those little boats,' said she, 'let's go and play at being fishermen in them.'

'Not at first,' says Bobby, 'let's build castles first.'

On hearing this Nettie put her finger in her mouth, and stood looking at him.

'You must play as I like,' said she.

And Bobby, who was a dear little fellow, and accustomed to Nettie's lead, nodded.

Then Nettie ran along the shingle, jumping from ridge to ridge, down on the bright, hard sand, to the very edge of the water. There were little boats, one painted black called 'The Arrow,' and one freshly painted white—'The Dart.'. This latter caught Nettie's fancy, for there were little blue waves coming half round it, and every prospect of their coming up higher. But Bobby ran still faster, and reached the goal first. He clambered up into the boat and took hold of the oars.

'Oh me, me too, dear Bobby!' cried Nettie, holding out her arms for her brother to help her. But Bobby drew her attention down to her socks.

'You'd get splashed,' said he, and Nettie stood disconsolate and silent for the blue water shone with a million sparkles. A mischievous, idle lad passing, saw Bobby in the boat that was half on the shore and half on the sea, and called:—

'Would you like to be off, little master?'

'Yes, yes,' said Bobby, and the other came down on to the loose, wet stones and pebbles, and launched 'The Dart.'

'Good-bye, Nettie,' cries out Bobby. 'I'm going to catch the ships. I'm going after that one with the white sails. Good-bye.'

But Nettie could only feel that Bobby was drifting away from her. Already there were three or four waves between them. Soon he would be as far as that ship. He was standing up and laughing. He had taken off his cap, and his hair was like so much sunshine. What a dear little fellow he looked!

'Bobby, Bobby, you will be drowned,' cried Nettie; 'come back, come back!'

But the winds rushed away with the words before they could get to Bobby. And Nettie burst out sobbing and crying.

'He will be drowned,' said she, turning to him who had launched the boat, and who was evidently enjoying her distress.

'Not he. He'll go right out yonder, and be a jolly sailor.'

'But I don't want him to be a sailor,' said Nettie, with renewed tears. 'I want him to come back. Bobby, Bobby!'

'He don't hear you. He's as happy as a sand-boy. Chance he'll bring you some silver-fish.'

'I don't want them. Bobby!'

At this instant Bobby's boat passed behind a breakwater, and Nettie could no longer see it. Her tormentor took this opportunity of frightening her.

'Where's the boat? Where's Bobby?

'Drowned,' gasped Nettie, and the sound of her own echoing voice was the only break in the silence.

Without one more question or look, Nettie

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rushed into the water, her face streaming with tears. Ankle-deep, knee-deep, shoulder-deep before her companion could overtake her.

'Well, you are a silly little lady,' he said, putting his arm round her wet waist: 'a perfect baby. My! ain't you sopping wet?'

Boy-like he was enchanted with her pluck, and rewarded it. Lifting her up on his shoulder, he showed her the tiny craft.

'There's your precious Bobby.'

'Bring—him—back,' gasped Nettie, and throwing her arms round his neck, she offered kisses, as bribes to the astonished big boy.

'I'll bring him back, little missie; but let's see you to land first.'

Silently Nettie allowed herself to be carried back, and placed again upon the shore. But she resisted all attempts to go home without Bobby. She stood by the remaining boats, her clean print frock dripping round her, her wet socks clinging to her little bare legs.

Meanwhile the boy prepared his father's boat, and skimmed rapidly out in the blue waters after Bobby.

Bobby sat and sang to himself like a little king. He was trying to lure the fishes up to him. He had some shining seaweed in one little hand, and held the other in the cool, green waves with a piece of bun for a bait. Through his brain danced visions of his mother's pale pink coral, which she had said had grown in the water. Why should not Bobby, too, find some treasures, and hang them himself round Nettie's white throat?

'Hi, little master! hi there!' but only Bobby's song floated back. So Nettie's ambassador brought his boat close up to Bobby's, and jumped into it. It was long before Bobby could be made to understand what had been the cause of poor Nettie's alarm, and most reluctantly was he brought to the knowledge that he must return.

He would so willingly have remained upon the sea, fishing with his one hand, singing, and enjoying himself, but in all justice to the little weeping sister on the shore, this could not be. In one moment the singing was stopped, the fishing was over, and Bobby and 'The Dart' turned to land. The generous, little brother forgave the full stop that had been put to his own pleasures, when he saw Nettie's tear-stained face, soiled frock, and wet shoes.

She kissed him hastily, dissatisfied with her own tenderness, and proceeded to scold.

'How you have vexed me, Bobby! I think you're the most foolish boy in the world. Trying to be drowned.'

'No, I didn't try,' said Bobby, who thought the reproach unmerited.

But Nettie instantly put up her finger to her mouth.

'And now you want to contradict me,' she said.

So Bobby, like a dear, wise little boy, said nothing more to her, but slid his shining piece of seaweed into her hand, and trotted along by her side.

When they got home it was found that Nettie's feet were as cold as ice, and that she could hardly speak of Bobby's adventure for trembling.

What the mother did, who shall say?

She used, I suppose, the magic peculiar to all mothers. Certainly it seemed magic that clad Nettie in warm, dry clothes, before Bobby had so much as changed his boots. Then Nettie found her voice, and told the story of Bobby the culprit; but though the mother spoke a warning, as Nettie so much wished, she took Bobby on her lap, and smoothed down his fluffy little curls with her white fingers, and kissed and petted him as much as Nettie.

Nettie was still so excited that her mother judged it best not to let her go out any more that day. Instead of this, she passed the afternoon by telling them stories of her own youth.

Nettie was to sleep with her mother, an extreme treat that occurred sometimes, and when she was settled in the large, white bed, her mother went up and kissed the pretty, tired eyes that were closed for the night. But far into the night, before the veil of darkness could be lifted from the land, Nettie's mother was wakened, for the little girl at her side was talking to her.

'Mother,' said Nettie, in her sleep, 'and its name was "The Dart."'

'The name of what?' the mother asked softly, taking hold of the little gesticulating hand; and Nettie answered her, drowsily:—

'The boat that took Bobby away.'

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SAM'S MARBLES.

'TAKE those marbles out of your pocket, Sam, or you'll be playing with them in school or church;' so said Dame Turner to her little grandson.

'I won't play with them, Granny; I promise, do let me keep them; if I don't Sue will get hold of them.'

'Take them out, I say, Sammy, or you'll get into trouble.'

Sammy was all ready to go to the Sunday-school, indeed, he was half across the threshold of the door; he came slowly back, fumbling in his pocket with his marbles. 'I know she'll get at them,' whimpered

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Sam, as he put them down on the kitchen-table.

Just then a child's loud cry caused Dame Turner to hasten upstairs; little Susy, her youngest grandchild, was evidently in grief; at the sound of her retreating footsteps Sam's countenance changed—he stretched out his hand, took back the marbles, looked at them, counted them, and then put them back into his pocket.

'It's not naughty of me,' thought Sam, 'for I won't take them out all day, and Granny will never know, so it won't vex her, and besides, if I left them about and Susy got them, she would, maybe, bolt one like she did the bean, and make herself ill.'

Oh, Sam! Sam! the naughty spirit is very busy with you this Sunday afternoon, persuading you that evil is good, just as it did your first mother, Eve, in the garden of Eden, long ago.

In school Sam behaved very well; in fact, he dare not do otherwise, for the old woman who kept school was very strict, and had been known to lock unruly boys in her back kitchen all church time if they did not behave well in school. She was very lame, however, and could not hobble to church; so, when there, the children were under the eye of Master Large, the churchwarden, a solemn old man with a very large waistcoat, which the children thought had something to do with his name.

The church was small and fitted up in a style that is now happily getting very rare, and the congregation, as you might expect, was small, too, for the people of Mervale had sleepy minds as well as bodies on a Sunday afternoon, and not many of them ever thought of coming to church more than once a-day. The school-children, however, were obliged to go twice, and as Master Large did not always see everything that passed, there was often a good deal of foolish talking and playing among them, when they should have been singing or praying.

This particular Sunday Sam sat beside a very poor boy, the son of a widow woman lately returned to her native village, and I am sorry to say Sam asked him during the hymn, why he had no boots on.

'Because mother has no money,' said little Tom, who was only too glad to chatter.

Just then the hymn came to an end, and they all ought to have knelt down, for the clergyman was saying the prayer before the sermon.

'My Granny has lots of money,' whispered Sam; 'she gave me a penny yesterday, and I bought six marbles.'

'Show us them,' said Tom.

But Sam shook his head; he remembered his Granny's words, and besides, Master Large had opened his eyes wider than usual and was looking at him. After a second or two Master Large took his eyes back into his pew, and then Sam said, 'And she gave me a pocket-handkerchief, too, with Joseph in the Pit on it.'

'Show us that,' said Tom.

And Sam thought he might show that in church, so he put his hand in his pocket and dragged it out.

The clergyman had just said Amen, and the clerk had said Amen, too, and there was a great silence broken only by a loud pat! pat! two of Sam's marbles had jumped out with the handkerchief and were rolling along the tiled floor of the aisle.

Tom looked round in a fright, and well he might, for Master Large was coming to them; and when he came, he stooped slowly and picked up the two marbles, Sam's very best ones. He put them into his waistcoat-pocket and went back to his pew.

Sam did not hear one word of the sermon for thinking how he should be punished afterwards. And the thing he was most afraid of did happen, as soon as service was over he was called up before the clergyman, who told him how naughty it was to play marbles in church, and desired Master Large to search his pockets, to see if he had any more in them. The other four marbles were found, and Sam went home, crying bitterly; all his precious marbles had been taken from him. He had not dared to tell the clergyman that he was not playing with them in church, because he knew he had been naughty enough to take them at all.

His Granny only said, 'Serve you right, Sam,' when she heard the story; and the only person who seemed a bit sorry for him was little Sue, who stroked his face, and said, 'Don't cry, Sammy.'

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After he had cried a good deal more a good spirit came to Sammy, and said, 'Leave off crying, and next time don't think you may be a little naughty without any harm coming of it, as you did when you took the marbles to church against Granny's wishes. God is angry with little sins when you do them wilfully. And be quiet and good in church, even when you do not understand what is said; it is God's house, where you were baptized and made a child of God, and if you try to keep quiet, I will come to you and put good thoughts in your mind.'

The Spirit did not say all this quite so plainly as I have written it, but Sam understood it very well. And he went and told Tom that he meant to be a good boy in church for the future.

By-and-bye, too, it was not so hard to keep good in Mervale church, for a new clergyman came who preached easier sermons, and the children sat on a bench near his wife, who smiled at them now and then, and found their places for them, and the hymns were sung a little quicker, which made them feel more lively and less sleepy. The big, high pews, too, were taken away, and people could see one another better and feel more as if they were one large family praying to one good God. Master Large did not quite like this at first, but even he got reconciled to it in time, when the clergyman explained to him the reason of the changes, and how each was intended for the good of the people. H. A. F.

TWO CHILDREN WHO SOUGHT FOR HEAVEN.

(*Concluded from page 76.*)

THE Werners were poor, they lived solely on what the brother earned in his profession, and had many expenses, their income was not sufficient to provide for from ten to twelve sick persons. But God did not leave them in distress, He sent His messengers who should provide them with everything needful. We have already seen what rich gifts poured into Maria's store-room; there were many histories connected with this little hospital, each chair, each bed, almost each dish, had its own story. Of these I must be silent to-day, for it is already getting dark, and we must spend the Christmas-evening with the brother and sister, instead of talking about them.

If any one had asked Maria—'Have you ever suffered want?' she would have answered cheerfully, 'No, never.'

Now the doctor came home. It was time too, for sick children must go early to bed, and they were all eagerly longing for what the Christ-child would bring them. Maria had arranged everything,—her brother kindled the lights, and then the merry little folk were allowed to enter. Four delicate pale forms tottered in, two children were carried in on their beds and placed down close to the Christmas-tree. Oh! what colour came into the pale faces, and how the weary eyes glistened! They sang a hymn, in which the faint voices of the poor children joined,—a hymn of praise to the infant Jesus! It was touching to see the children when they received the gifts which the Christ-child's love had provided for them. One little girl pressed her doll so tightly to her as if she would never be separated from it, and a little boy, who, from his grave manner was called 'The uncle,' tried to put on a warm cap, while the little girl in bed had the contents of a whole Noah's ark walking upon her cover-lid! They were delighted, they played, they sang, while Johannes and Maria went about from one to the other, as happy as the happiest of them.

And now the doctor and his sister went on to their elder patients. These all lay in their beds, but they got up and looked cheerfully at the Christmas-tree which blazed in the middle of the room, and when Hans and Maria went from one bed to the other, giving some useful and suitable present, and saying a kind word to each, many an eye was moist, and warm words of gratitude came from pale lips. Johannes now read the Gospel for Christmas-day, then knelt down and prayed God that all might know and feel His love, with which He had so loved all, that He had sent His only-be-

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gotten Son into the world that all might inherit eternal life.

But it was already growing late, and Maria now drew her brother into her own room, where she had prepared something for him. He, on his part, was rejoicing in the covered-up little table which he had had secretly carried in thither. But how were both surprised by the sight now offered to them! There stood the tree adorned with many lights and the white angels hovering among the branches, and the tree looked exactly as it did twenty-four years ago, when the children saw it with such rapturous joy; that tree Maria recognised, but it was quite out-topped by a tall large fir-tree which stood beside it, which burned as brightly, but bore very singular fruits, of which she knew not whence they came. Its pedestal was a large white barrel, out of which it seemed to grow. It might well have flourished in such a rich soil, for the barrel was full of butter, and from the lower branches of the tree hung very strange fruits, —a ham, a side of bacon, a hare, many sausages, little baskets with coffee, sugar, rice, and such-like things, garlands of raisins and preserved fruits encircled them; among them hung apples, oh, such a number! They were not covered with gold and silver paper, yet they had gold and silver inside them, real silver pieces of two and four groschen, as well as hard florins and dollars, and one apple contained golden fruit. Many sovereigns shone forth from it, and from the stalk of it hung a note, on which was written:—

'*I know you will use this to a good purpose.* 'FRAU SORO.'

High up from the very top of the tree a little flag waved, and when the doctor looked up to it, he read these words:—*For Doctor Werner and his sick folk.* Brother and sister stood deeply affected. The grateful love of the peasants had provided for them this strange tree; this was the earthly Christmas-gift which God bestowed on them. Maria held the golden apple of Frau Soro in her hand, it seemed to assure her that the donor would one day give herself to the Lord! What stores, what riches! Now kitchen and storehouse would be full, now they could give out abundantly.

'Oh, I should never have thought this of the people!' exclaimed Maria at last.

'They all love you,' replied her brother.

'No, that applies to you,' replied Maria, 'you heal their sick, you are always so kind to them all.'

'We won't quarrel about it,' said Johannes; 'God is the real giver of all these gifts, we will thank Him and devote our whole lives to Him. How wonderfully He has led us, when I think how we once as children started off to seek for heaven——'

'We have found it, Hans,' exclaimed Maria, happily, 'we already possess heaven here upon earth.'

And when the lights on the trees had burned down, brother and sister still sat side by side, and from the dark room the song sounded forth loud and clear,

'Heavenward! heavenward! only this
Is my watchword on the earth,
For the love of heavenly bliss,
Counting all things little worth;
Heavenward all my being tends,
Till in heaven my journey ends.'

MARY, THE GROUNDSEL GIRL.

A LITTLE girl stands
By yon ivy-bound sill,
And holds in her hands
Some newly-plucked groundsel.

For in at the window
A bird-cage she spies,
And to sell off her groundsel
She tries and she cries.

'Oh, please buy a penn'orth
To feed your canary;
With you that is little—
'Tis much to poor Mary.

'When I put in some groundsel
To my own little linnet,
It seems to sing sweeter
The very next minute.'

Poor Mary! we 'll purchase
A part of her store,
And put with the money
One little coin more.

For her father is poorly,
His earnings are small;
God bless little Mary,
Who tends him through all. H.

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Mary, the Groundsel Girl.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VII.] JULY, 1870. [One Penny.

Charlie Benson

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MISCHIEF.

'OH, what a jolly day!' exclaimed Charlie Benson, as he jumped out of bed and threw open the window; 'I'm glad it doesn't rain.'

He stood for a minute in the warm sunshine that poured into his room, enjoying the fresh air, scented as only early morning air ever is scented, and then he began to wash and dress, for he heard his mother moving about downstairs, and knew breakfast would soon be ready. Presently her voice called,—

'Charlie, Charlie, are you awake?'

'Yes, mother, I'm coming.'

And in a few minutes he was sitting at the table, with a large piece of bread-and-butter in his hand, while his mother dressed little Johnnie, who was only three years old.

'Isn't it a jolly day, mother?' exclaimed Charlie, with his mouth full of bread-and-butter; 'no fear of the feast being spoilt this time.'

'No, I don't think it will be spoilt by rain at any rate,' replied Mrs. Benson. 'I am very glad it is fine. You children make a fine fuss about these school-feasts.'

'Me go, too,' petitioned Johnnie; me like feast.'

'Johnnie shall go when he is bigger!' promised his mother.

Attercliffe school-feast was *the* day of all the year to every child between four and fourteen who attended regularly as a scholar—and the fear of being kept away from it made many an idle boy and girl go to the schools, when they would otherwise have been wandering about the lanes and fields wasting their time and spoiling their clothes.

Of course it was a whole holiday, but though the children liked this very much, their parents would rather have had them out of the way, for they were so excited about the treat which was to come off in the afternoon that only a few of the steady ones could settle to anything useful, and many a mother was glad when the time came to dress her children, and send them off to the school-house.

'Now, Charlie, you take Johnnie out into the garden and play with him,' said Mrs. Benson, when breakfast was finished. 'I have a great deal to do this morning: there's bread to be baked, and your new brown holland pinafore to be finished, or it won't be ready for you to wear this afternoon.'

Charlie was very anxious to have the new pinafore; which was to be fastened below his waist with a shiny leather belt, bought last market-day, and often looked at, but never touched, as it lay in his mother's drawer next to the pretty blue silk necktie which was to finish off his costume.

For some time he and Johnnie played together very happily, but when the sun grew hot the little fellow became cross and sleepy, and was put in his cradle for his morning nap. Then Charlie had nothing to do, and it often happens that when people have nothing good and useful to do, they do something mischievous and naughty. So after Charlie had lounged about the home and yard he took to throwing stones at a sandy cat that was sitting fast asleep on the wall. Charlie could not throw very straight—his stones quite as often went one way as another, and the cat seemed to know it, for she opened her eyes, blinked at him, and shut them again, as much as to say, 'I'm not going to disturb myself for you.'

This vexed Charlie, and made him cross. so he took up a bigger stone and tried to shy it with all his might, but the stone took a wrong turn; instead of going at the cat it went on one side right on to a dish which was standing in the yard. There was a crash. It frightened the cat, but it frightened Charlie more. For his mother had often told him that she would not have stones thrown near the house, and this was the second accident of the kind that had happened within a week.

Of course Mrs. Benson was very angry, and Charlie was dreadfully afraid that she might keep him at home from the feast;

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but she contented herself with scolding him well, and Charlie crept out of sight as quietly as he could. But he could not remain quiet long, and before dinner-time he had cut his fingers with the wood hatchet, torn his pinafore in the hedge while climbing after some honey-suckles, and pulled the tap out of the rain water-butt, because he wanted to see if it would move. The butt was nearly full, out came the water with a steady rush that frightened Charlie. Over him, over the yard, ran the precious soft water which his mother so carefully kept for her washing; and it would all have been wasted had not Mrs. Benson, hearing the noise, looked out of the door and seen the mischief that was going on. To pop in the plug and hold it there while she sent Charlie for the hammer was her first action. But when it was safely knocked into its place, Charlie got a good box on the ear, and this time the threat of being kept at home was uttered as if his mother really meant it. But Charlie cried and begged so piteously, and gave so many promises of being quite good all the rest of the day, that at last Mrs. Benson forgave him, but she took care to keep him in sight for the remainder of the morning.

As soon as dinner was over Charlie was washed again, and dressed in his new clothes. The shiny belt and the blue tie made him look quite a smart little lad, and his mother sent him off to the school with a proud kiss, but with a warning about keeping out of mischief, which was by no means unnecessary.

At three o'clock the children all assembled at the school; then the procession was formed. Numbers of little flags and bunches of flowers fastened to wands made it a very gay procession; and when all was ready the master gave the word, and away they went towards the church, singing some of their marching tunes till they got to the churchyard gate. A halt was made, and they entered the holy ground to the sound of one of the hymns familiar to them all. Afternoon prayer followed, and then the vicar preached a sermon to the school-children, and no one else, though many other people were in church. And as he only preached for five minutes even the little ones had no time to get tired of it.

'From all evil and mischief, good Lord, deliver us,' began the vicar as he stood in the pulpit.

Charlie looked up and began to listen. He had been thinking more about his blue tie and shiny belt, about the plum-cake and fruit, and the games and races that were to follow, than about the service in which he had taken part. But the vicar's text—if it can be called so—made him prick up his ears, and he listened with all his might when he found what the sermon was about, for it was about 'mischief.'

'From all evil and mischief, good Lord, deliver us.'

'I suppose there is hardly one of you children who have not been scolded for getting into mischief at some time or other, very likely some of you may have been doing mischief this morning, and may do more before bed-time.'

(To be continued.)

NO ONE WILL SEE ME.

'NO one will see me,' said little John Day,
For his father and mother were out of the way,
And he was at home all alone;
'No one will see me;' so he climb'd on a chair,
And peep'd in the cupboard to spy what was there,—
Which of course, he ought not to have done.

There stood in the cupboard, so sweet and so nice,
A plate of plum-cake in full many a slice,
And apples so ripe and so fine;
'Now no one will see me,' said John to himself,
As he stretch'd out his arm to reach up to the shelf:
'This apple at least shall be mine.'

John paused, and put back the nice apple so red,
For he thought of the words his kind mother had said,
When she left all these things in his care;
'And no one will see me,' thought he, 'is not true;
For I've read that God sees us in all that we do,
And is with us everywhere.'

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Little John Day.

Well done, John; your father and mother obey,
Try ever to please them, and mind what they say,
Even when they are absent from you;
And never forget, that, though no one be nigh,
You cannot be hid from the glance of God's eye,
Who notices all that you do.

Rhymes worth Remembering.

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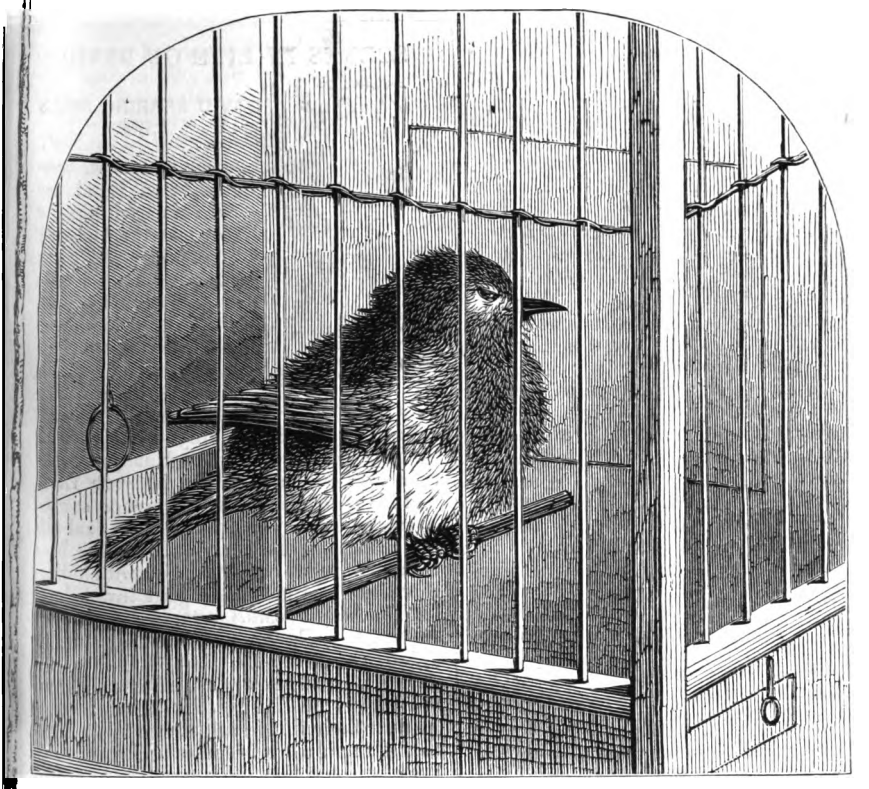


THE DYING ROBIN.

A LITTLE girl had a Robin brought to her which had been caught in a trap.

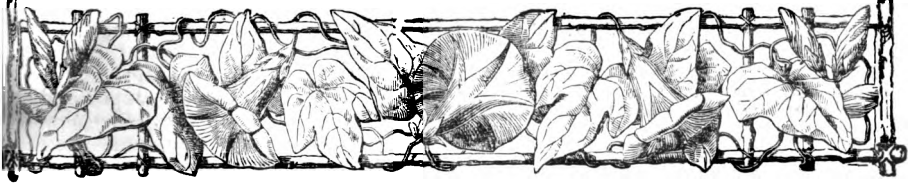
'Robins never live in prison,' her sister said; but the little girl shook her head.

'My Robin will be so happy, that he will be obliged to live. I am going to put him in the pretty cage upstairs, and I shall give him bread and milk, and worms, and bird-seed, and groundsel.'

She put the bird in the cage, but it took no notice of the tempting food, it only beat its breast against the gilded wires, and puffed out its feathers till it looked double its real size.

'Oh,' said the little girl, 'he'll soon get used to it,' and she went to bed.

Next morning she visited her Robin. She could scarcely believe he was the same bright-eyed bird she had thought so pretty yesterday: his black eyes were closed, his feathers disordered and broken, and when



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she went up to his cage he beat his little breast against the bars as if he were trying to set his heart free.

'Let him out,' said the sister, 'or he will die.'

The little girl shook her head obstinately.

'That would be a pity; he has spent a day in the cage, so he must have got half used to it. By this time to-morrow he will be all right, he will be quite used to it. Good-bye, Bobby, I shall not come again till you have grown happy.'

Next morning the little girl came again. There was no fluttering sound against the wires, and for a moment she felt confident.

Robin sat quietly on the perch, but he looked more puffed out than ever.

'Bobby, Bobby,' she said, but Bobby did not answer; he cared nothing now for the cage or for her presence—he was dying. His little heart had broken at last, and he was free. That was the way he got *quite used* to his prison.

THREE STARS.

THREE beautiful Stars, with a lustrous light,
Have softened the gloom of many a night;
And still they shine on with a deathless ray;
No meteor-stars in the sky are they.

Art thou groping along in a misty path,
Where the sun no guiding influence hath?
What scatters thy doubt? what gladdens thy youth?
'Tis the beauteous Star of a Mother's Truth.

Art thou wandering on 'mid a perilous spot,
With the darkness so dense that thou knowest it not?
What leads thee along in security there?
'Tis the vigilant Star of a Mother's Care.

Art thou mocked by the proud, unpitying world?
Is the scorn of the rich at thy poverty hurl'd?
A Star still shines in the heavens above—
'Tis the exquisite Star of a Mother's Love.

O Mother-Truth! Mother-Care! Mother-Love! more
Are ye to be prized than a golden store!
Endowments surpassing all earth can bestow.
To heighten our pleasure and lessen our woe,

J. B. TAYLOR.

SCENES IN LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID SPARING SAUL'S LIFE.

WE come now to the occasion when David and Saul saw each other for the last time in their lives. The meeting took place in the wilderness of Ziph, near the Dead Sea. In this wild region there was a little village, also called Ziph, and though the inhabitants belonged to David's own tribe, they had a short time before betrayed him to Saul. (1 Sam. xxxiii. 19–24.) But just when there was only a high hill between David and his pursuers so that his escape seemed hopeless, God so ordered it that Saul and his men were suddenly called away by a messenger, who came in haste with tidings that the Philistines had again invaded the land, *wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines.* (25–28.)

We do not know why, after such treatment from the Ziphites, David ventured to go near their village again, but if he hoped to find them more friendly he was greatly mistaken, for they betrayed him a second time to Saul; perhaps from the fear that, if David came to the throne, he would never pardon their treachery. They sent word to Saul that David and his men were at the hill of Hachilah, where he was when they betrayed him before, and the king gladly hastened to the wilderness with a band of three thousand warriors, determined this time to capture him.

Now this was most faithless conduct, because, since David's last escape, he had spared Saul's life at En-gedi, when he might easily have killed him in his sleep.

On reaching the spot where they expected to meet with David, Saul and his men found that he had gone further on into the wilderness, and therefore, in order to rest for the night, they encamped at the foot of the hill. (1 Sam. xxvi. 1–3.) When David heard that they had come to seek

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him again, he resolved to visit the camp that same night, and try to bring Saul back to a better state of feeling.

In the stillness of the night therefore, David rose up with his nephew Abishai, and another trusty follower, Ahimelech. They made their way through the thick bushes and the clefts of the rocks until they came to the brow of a hill, from which they could distinctly see the camp lying below them in the moonlight. It was arranged as camps usually were in Eastern lands. The baggage-waggons (or carriages, as they are called in the margin of our Bibles) were drawn up in a circle to form a sort of rampart or defence, and David knew that in the centre of this circle was the king surrounded by his warriors. Everything was so silent that it was evident the whole camp was asleep after the fatigue of the day's march from Gibeah. David said to Ahimelech and Abishai, *Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?* But only Abishai was bold enough to answer, *I will go down with thee.* So they went softly down the hill-side to the camp, and then passed noiselessly through the circle of carriages, and in and out amongst the weary, slumbering men, until they reached the very spot where lay the king, and close by him Abner, the captain of the host.

By the side of the bolster which supported Saul's head his spear was stuck firmly into the ground, and for his refreshment, if he awoke thirsty in the night, there stood by him a vessel of water.

But where were the sentinels who should have been guarding the camp? It would seem that feeling only contempt for David's six hundred followers, Saul's soldiers (who were just five times as many in number) had not thought it needful to set any watch that night; and so soundly was every man asleep, that although David and Abishai walked and talked among them, no one awoke at the sound. We are told that *a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them*, and this is thought to mean that after allowing themselves to fall asleep so carelessly without a guard to protect their king, God for His servant David's sake bound them in a sleep so heavy that nothing could awaken them until He loosened them from it.

When Abishai saw how completely Saul was in David's power, he asked leave to kill him with a single blow of the spear that was stuck in the ground as if ready for the purpose. The opportunity must have been a strong temptation even to so noble a spirit as David's. The tempter no doubt whispered to him some such thought as this:—'Saul has been so shamefully false to you, that God has given him into your hands, and at this very moment you may put an end to all your wanderings and hardships. You need not slay him yourself; you can let the deed be Abishai's, and you can both escape before Abner and the rest are awake.' But happily for David, the Holy Spirit had taught him that to trust wholly in God's help, and to wait patiently for His time, was the only right means by which he could obtain the throne which now he was tempted to win by letting Abishai slay Saul.

The horror which he felt at the thought of such a sin was expressed in his reply: *The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed;* but, to prove to Saul how easily they might have taken away his life, *David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked.* Then David went and stood on the top of a hill from whence he could make himself heard by Saul and Abner, and where he was at the same time safe from any one who might try to approach him, and in the clear air of Eastern lands the voice can be heard at a much greater distance than in England.

It was probably just when morning dawned that Abner and the host were awakened by the sound of a man's voice calling to Saul, and to them from the hill-side. Presently the voice cried, *Answerest thou not, Abner?* When the captain of the host asked, *Who art thou that criest to the king?* instead of answering his question: *David said to Abner, Art thou not a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy*

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David taking Saul's Spear.

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Summer Time.

P. 106.

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lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done.

Having thus reproved Abner for his neglect, David said to the whole host, *As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die because ye have not kept your master the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster.* No doubt as he uttered the words, he held up the spear and the cruse in the sight of Abner and the host. By this time Saul had awoke, and knowing David's voice, he said, *Is this thy voice, my son David?*

And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. And then he tried to show Saul how unjustly he was being treated. And so true were his words that the king said, *I have sinned,* and then after inviting David to return to court, he added, *Behold I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly.* To understand these words fully we must remember that here, as in other passages of Holy Scriptures, a fool means one who is wicked, and not, as with us, one who is wanting in sense.

David wisely resolved not to trust again to Saul's promises, and therefore, instead of accepting his invitation, he said, *Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.* Then he declared his hope of continuing safe under God's protection, and Saul answered, *Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail.* So David went back into the wilderness with Abishai, and Saul returned to Gibeah.

How gladly in after years David must have remembered that, owing to his forbearance and patience with Saul, the king's last words to him had been words of blessing! It will often cost us a sharp struggle to return good for evil. But, if by God's grace we are enabled to do so, we shall afterwards feel such thankfulness and gladness of heart, and such peace of mind as will repay us a thousand times for whatever we may have suffered in trying to obey the command, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.* (St. Matt. v. 44.)

SUMMER TIME.

I LIKE the cheerful summer time,
With all its birds and flowers,
Its shining garments green and smooth,
Its cool, refreshing showers.

I like to hear the little birds
That carol on the trees;
I like the gentle, murmuring stream,
I like the evening breeze.

I like the bright and glorious sun,
That gives us light and heat:
I like the pearly drops of dew
That sparkle 'neath my feet.

I like to hear the busy hum
Of honey-making bee,
And learn a lesson, hard to learn,
Of patient industry.

I like to feed the playful lambs,
So innocent and gay;
I like the faithful, watchful dog,
Who guards them night and day.

I like to think of Him who made
These pleasant things for me:
Who gave me life, and health, and strength,
And eyes that I might see.

MAGGIE'S LESSON.

'OH, please, Miss Hawkins, need I say my dates this morning? I never shall know them, and I do so want to be in the garden. Lilla and Frisk have been out ever so long. Mayn't I go?'

'I must have the dates said first, Maggie,' said her governess; 'your father is so anxious you should know them perfectly since the day when you told him that the Great Fire of London took place in William the Conqueror's reign.'

'Oh, but that was only a mistake,' said Maggie. 'I was thinking of the Curfew Bell when the lights and fires were to be put out, and I just caught the word "Fire," and answered in a hurry. Oh dear, there's

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Lilla calling Frisk to go down to the meadow, and they won't wait for me;' and poor Maggie looked entreatingly at Miss Hawkins.

'If you would shut your ears and your eyes for five minutes, Maggie, you would soon know your lesson. Indeed, I cannot let you off, I must hear the dates every day.'

'I have said them four times this week,' said Maggie, a little sulkily; 'why need I say them every day?'

'Learn your lesson now, Maggie, and don't talk,' was all the answer Miss Hawkins gave.

Maggie was not a naughty little girl, though she was rather fond of arguing, and seeing Miss Hawkins was in earnest, she set to work to learn her task, and in five minutes repeated perfectly all the dates of the English kings.

'Victoria, 1830. Please may I go now?' she exclaimed in a breath, and Miss Hawkins laughed and nodded.

Off flew Maggie, catching up her hoop in the hall, and waiting neither for hat nor jacket.

Maggie found her sister and their little dog just under the schoolroom window. 'Here I am at last,' she said; 'those horrid dates kept me. I wonder why Miss Hawkins makes me say them every day, for I do know them nearly perfectly; and besides,' and here she lowered her voice, 'I do think it is almost wicked to keep people at lessons such a lovely day.'

Lilla, her elder sister, smiled at this; she was more steady at her work than Maggie, and seldom was kept in.

'Let us go into the meadow now, Maggie; I waited for you,' she said, 'and Frisk is wild for a run.'

'Stop a minute, Lilla; he has never begged this morning? You make him do it—he obeys you best.'

But Frisk capered about, and wagged his tail, and was not inclined to do anything so serious as 'beg' till the children spoke very severely to him, and then he came trembling up, and sat down on his hind-legs.

'Good dog! now beg!' said Lilla. 'See, Maggie, he does it quite well.'

'Yes, dear!' said Maggie; 'but we must not forget to make him do it every day, or he will get out of the habit of it. No, sir, be quiet! Don't snap at that butterfly, or you will lose your balance. Naughty dog!' she exclaimed, as Frisk did snap at it, and fell over immediately, 'you are very inattentive to-day.'

'He wants so to be off for a run,' said Lilla. 'See, Maggie, how he trembles and pricks his ears; shall I let him go?'

'Certainly not yet,' said little Maggie, decidedly; 'he has got more to do. Here is a bit of grass, and now he must smoke his pipe. Take it, sir. You see, Lilla, he must learn these things while he is young. I daresay he thinks me cruel, but it is all for his good.'

'And I daresay Maggie thought me cruel; but it was all for her good,' said a voice at the window.

The children looked up, and there stood Miss Hawkins.

'I see you know now, Maggie dear, why I make you say your dates every day, you have just explained it all so clearly to Frisk.'

'Have I?' said Maggie, looking rather puzzled.

'Of course you have,' said Lilla, laughing; 'don't you remember? Like Frisk learning to set up, you must do it every day, that you may not forget it; and you must learn while you are young, and not want to scamper about till you have done your lessons, however fine the day is; and you must not think your teacher cruel. Oh, Maggie, what fun, to think all the time you have been lecturing yourself!'

'Never mind, Maggie,' said Miss Hawkins, seeing the little girl look rather foolish; 'I have not the least doubt that it will do you far more good than any lecture of mine. And next time I seem a little bit strict think of Frisk. Ah, there he is, off across the grass; run and catch him up, it is play-time now. Come, who will be first?'

Lilla and Maggie rushed away, and were soon at high play, all three quite forgetting lesson-time.

Since that day, however, Maggie no longer thinks Miss Hawkins cruel when she keeps her in to learn her task more perfectly.

H.A.F.

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Maggie's Lesson.

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COLD WATER.

'COLD water thrown upon every-thing one does! I am sick of it: I am disgusted!' This was what I overheard one lady say to another, as I hastily passed them on the pavement the other day. I did not quite admire the tone in which it was uttered. It implied peevishness, impatience, and a dislike to be found fault with; and yet I thought there might be a grain of truth in it.

Now, we all know cold water is an excellent thing in its place, and when rightly

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used. How many a thirsty traveller has blessed the hand that held out to him the cooling draught! How many a poor soldier on the battle-field, faint from his wounds, has caught at the cup of water which some kind comrade has brought him, has drunk, and been refreshed! Our blessed Lord Himself spoke with approval of giving a 'cup of cold water in the name of a disciple;' and you remember how, when sitting weary by Jacob's well, He said to the woman of Samaria, 'Give Me to drink.' In many places in the East the water-carrier, with his water-skin upon his shoulder, goes along inviting the people to buy 'the gift of God, the gift of God.'

And we know, too, what a beautiful as well as useful thing is cold water. What can be more charming than to walk beside a sparkling, bubbling brook? It refreshes one to look upon it: and to bathe one's hands in it is a positive luxury.

What, then, could be the lady's meaning in speaking so querulously of so useful a thing?

Supposing that on some cold, winter night, you were seated beside a bright fire, enjoying its pleasant warmth, and that some one suddenly dashed a pail of cold water on it, and in a moment light, brightness, and warmth, were all changed into darkness, dampness, and cold; you would, perhaps, realise something of the feeling that led her to say the words.

A group of joyous children are having a merry game, when, suddenly, something offends the little boy to whom the ball belongs; he snatches it up, saying, 'You shan't have my ball any longer: I want it myself.' The happy countenances are at once clouded with disappointment and sorrow. Selfishness is the 'cold water' which was thrown on the children's play.

'Will you please to hear whether I can say my spelling, sister?' says an eager little student. 'Oh, never mind just now, Johnnie! I want to finish this story; you can wait a bit,' is the rejoinder; and Johnnie's bright face is quickly downcast, tears standing in his eyes. The 'cold water' has done its work, and the love of study has been checked by the sister's selfishness.

'Ella, dear Ella, do come and look at my pretty dolly, which Auntie has sent me. I never saw one half so lovely before. Now isn't she a beauty?' 'Well, I daresay *you* think so; but I have a far handsomer one at home.' Miss Dolly was quietly consigned to her cradle, and not taken up again till the young visitor had left the house. The 'cold water' had damped the pleasure of this visit, so eagerly looked forward to.

I have known even big boys and girls coldly refuse some trifling present from a very little one, saying, 'I don't care for such things.' Did it never occur to them, that by throwing 'cold water' on these simple tokens of affection they were chilling the warm young hearts, and turning from themselves the love which would hereafter be priceless?

I daresay many of you remember some instance in which *you* felt this chilling effect. Try, then, to save others from such pain, by being kind and obliging; doing unto others as you would have others do to you. If we have the love of Christ in our hearts, we shall be willing to deny ourselves that we may give pleasure to others. We read that 'God loves a cheerful *giver;*' and we may be sure He loves a cheerful *doer* of kind things: but He also loves those who know how to use the *tongue* gently and persuasively, yet without hypocrisy and guile. F. F. E.

A BASKET OF BLACKBERRIES.

'WHAT is the matter with you this morning, Jane?' asked a pale-faced, boy, in whining tones; 'can't you come and read to me a bit?'

'We are all going blackberrying after school, Dick, and I have this long seam to finish. Mother has promised to wash with Mrs. Stevens, and she says she will look in upon you now and then, just to see you've got all you want, so don't make such a long face, there's a dear;' and she smoothed his pillow and brought him his carving tools.

Tears came into the poor boy's eyes as he thought of the many merry blackberryings he had known before his illness, but his sister kissed them away, and said good-

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naturedly, 'Well, Dick, if you mind so very much, perhaps I'll stay at home and look after you.'

'No, no, nonsense,' he said fretfully, turning his face away from her and hiding it in the bedclothes to stifle the sobs that would make themselves heard in spite of all his efforts.

'Dick dear, don't take on so,—I'll stay here. Indeed I will, only don't turn away and speak so snappish.'

'I did not speak snappish,' was the only answer, and not another word could all her coaxing get out of him.

With a heavy heart Jane turned to her work again, she was trying to make up her mind to what, for her, was a great piece of self-denial—giving up the blackberrying. 'I'm so happy here,' she said to herself, 'with mother and Dick, and I so seldom give up anything I like for Jesus' sake, or try to please Him—yes—I will stay at home.' But the sunbeams came dancing in at the window, and brought with them thoughts of the fine juicy fruit, the long hooked sticks, and the voices of the merry party, till Jane very nearly wavered in her resolution; still she knew it was a right one, and then again those very sunbeams seemed to whisper, 'He came not to do His own will—nor did we—nor did you, Jane. Bear up and do His will, not your own, it is the only way to be happy and good.'

So the afternoon came, and with it the voices of her schoolfellows, calling to her to be quick, or the finest blackberries would all be gone.

'I'm not coming,' she said, 'Dick wants me.'

'Not coming, Jane! it won't be half fun without you,' cried several voices, 'your mother will look after Dick.' But Jane did not hear, she had turned away from the door, and was sitting by her brother's side.

'And so you have not gone after all, Jane, and only because I was so cross this morning. I am sorry,' began Dick, whose ill-humour had quite melted away, and as she threw her arms round his neck and kissed him, he went on, 'You don't know how horrid it is to be left here with you all away,—if I were to die, Jane, all alone here in the dark. Oh, I couldn't bear it.'

'Dick, you mustn't think of such things,' she said, creeping closer, 'besides, if you did, you know Jesus and the angels would take care of you—much better care than we could.'

'But I'm so wicked and so selfish. Jane, will you get the book the squire's lady sent me, and read a bit?'

The book was so amusing that Jane soon forgot the blackberries in her wonder at what was coming next, till she was startled by a voice behind her crying out, 'Hi, Jane, you never saw such beauties! Look here, I have brought a basketful for you and Dick.'

'Oh, Tom, how good of you to bring them! Thank you; oh, thank you; they are beauties,' said Jane, all in a breath.

Dick's fingers were already deep in the basket, and every blackberry he drew out seemed finer than the last.

'Now we three may sit here and eat, and talk, mayn't we?' asked Tom, perching himself on an end of the table straight in front of Dick's bed, and between mouthfuls of blackberries, he began describing how little Sally Stevens had tumbled into a ditch, and how Jack Saunders had pulled her out and carried her home pick-a-back, with a frock all over dark-brown mud, and how Mrs. Stevens opened her eyes and said, 'La! Sally, what a mess you have been and made of yourself!' and how they had eaten and picked, and picked and eaten, till fingers and mouths all grew black, and no one could tell which were the blackest: and how James Carter had hooked down the finest nuts ever seen in Fern Hollow; and so they chatted on till Dick's mother came home, and then Tom ran off to find some more blackberries before it was too dark to see them.

And so it was that Jane took her first step along the narrow road of self-denying love which her Saviour had trodden before her, and many a time in her after-life she has looked back to that act, so very small in itself, but still large enough to teach her the great truth, 'He came not to do His own will,'—nor did we,—but the will of Him that sent us. G. D.

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ASLEEP AND AWAKE.

BABY'S asleep! keep quiet now, little ones,
Don't make a noise with the bricks or the ball:
Look at your pictures and softly spell stories out,
Only take care the big book does not fall.

Baby's asleep; yet he's smiling and cooing,
Under his coverlet happy and warm;
Smiling is thanking (from such little children)
God and their mother for safety from harm.

Baby's awake! little brothers and sisters,
Clap your hands at him, he's looking for you.
Now for real play, and for jumping and dancing,
And baby's the man who will dance with you too.

Baby's awake; such a dear little fellow,
Much more amusing than doll, book, or toy;
No one would mind keeping quiet a little,
To see him wake up such a bright happy boy.

H. A. F.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. V II.] AUGUST, 187C. [One Penny.

'Please help me with this sum, sister Ellen.'

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THE LAW OF LOVE.

'PLEASE help me with this sum, sister Ellen, and then I'll not trouble you again to-night. I've tried it over and over again, but it isn't right after all.' And little Charley Stanley put his hand to his head, as if he had thought so long upon his puzzling sum as to make his head ache.

'Oh dear, Charley, I'm sure I've shown you how to do every one of the sums in your lessons already, and I want to finish this story.'

'Ellen,' said Mrs Stanley in surprise, 'I am very sorry you should allow yourself to speak so unkindly to your little brother. Charley, my son, you may come to me; I will help you, if your sister is unwilling to do so.

'Thank you, thank you, mother,' and Charley's eye sparkled with pleasure as he brought his slate; 'when this sum is done, my lesson is all ready for to-morrow; and father said, I might go to grandpa's to-morrow afternoon if my lessons are perfectly learned. Ellen has shown me three, and you one, and I have done seven all alone; but this one I cannot get right.'

'Very well for a little boy of eight; but I hope soon to see you try to conquer all difficulties alone. Here, my son, is your mistake, in adding this column of figures; look it over, and add it carefully, and when that is done the sum will be right.'

Charley, thus encouraged, went again over the sum, discovered and corrected the mistake, then put away his slate, and books, with the self-satisfied feeling we may all enjoy when we have patiently and faithfully tried to do our duty.

'Oh, mother,' said Charley, 'I feel as though you had lifted a great weight from me, and now I can rise up as light as a feather.'

'Your lessons were a burden, my son, this evening, because you were tired; at another time, when you are well, you would not feel so. I only obeyed the law of love in assisting you.'

'Law of love, mother! I do not know what you mean.'

'I mean that law which makes it our duty to help each other at all times and in all places, as we have opportunity.'

With a light, happy heart, and an affectionate kiss upon his mother's lips, Charley left the room soon after, not daring, however, to say good-night to Ellen, fearing another cross look or word if he should disturb her.

He had scarcely closed the door, when Ellen threw down the book, exclaiming, 'There, I have finished the story, and it is not much after all.'

'And to read that story which you care so little about, you threw away one of earth's greatest pleasures,' said Mrs. Stanley seriously.

Ellen looked at her mother a few moments, and said, 'I do not know what you mean, mother.'

'I mean the pleasure of doing good, of bearing another's burden. You know Charley is never quick at figures, and now is more than usually troubled to keep up with his class, because he has been absent a week on account of illness, and is still weak from the effects of it. His lessons are really a great burden to him just now; you are four years older than he is, and might be of great use to him, if you would. I have a motto for you to learn, which, if practised every day by each one of us, would make this world a much happier one than it now is.'

'I know I am selfish, mother,' said Ellen. 'Do you think I ever can be good?'

'Yes, dear, if you ask God to renew your heart, and give you a right spirit, leading you to Christ, that you may become like Him, the Holy Spirit will help you to be good.'

'But mother, what was the rule you were to give me to cure selfishness?'

'"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."'

A child has duties every day, and God gives all the necessary strength to perform those duties, but requires no more of us than we are able to perform. At home and abroad, remember this law of love, 'Do to others as you would have others do to you,'

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and 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' If these rules are always obeyed, we shall know that we are striving to become like Christ.

ALICE LEE.

A LITTLE child was heard to say,
'Oh! had I wings I'd fly away.
Fly to the happy home above,
Fly to the Saviour Whom I love,
And stay with Him alway!'

A happy child was Alice Lee,
A happier child you could not see.
The lambs that sported all the day,
The robin warbling on the spray,
Were not more blithe than she.

Her voice, so soft and silvery clear,
Was music to her mother's ear,
But now those sweet tones made her start,
A sudden terror smote her heart,
A strange foreboding fear.

Another year—and bird and bee
Are holding daily revelry,
And merry children laugh and play
In song and sunshine all the day,
But not sweet Alice Lee.

On her low couch, in constant pain,
Moaning and seeking rest in vain
She lies; sometimes she hears without
The wild bird's song, the children's shout;
She will not play again.

And day by day she grows more weak
And faint; for hours she does not speak,
The eyes that were her mother's light,
Are closed; her hands are wan and white;
A flush is on her cheek.

'Oh, mother dear! I wonder why
To such a little child as I
My Father sends this fever sore?
Oh, mother!'—she could say no more;
Her mother made reply—

'I heard my Alice wish one day
That she had wings to flee away
And be with Christ! but then you know
You were quite well, long, long ago!
There is no other way

To Him, from us on earth below,
Than through the gates of death to go,
Through pain, and ofttimes agony;
They struggle, who with Christ would be,
Through trial and through woe.

That was my darling's wish last year,
Ere she could know 'twould cost her dear.
If she might rosy be and stronger,
Now would she gladly live on longer;
Stay with her mother here?'

SORRY IS NOT 'NUFF.

ALLAN! Where is Allan?' A moment ago he was playing with his little cart in the yard, hauling dirt to the currant bushes. I cannot tell how many carts full he carried. He was as busy as a little man. But Allan was gone. There is his cart.

'Allan! Allan!'

'I'se here!' at last said a small voice from the back-parlour.

'What are you there for?' asked his mother, opening the door and looking in.

Allan did not answer at first. He was standing in the corner with a very sober look on his face.

'Come out to your little cart,' said his mother; 'it is waiting for another run.'

'I'se not been here long 'nuff,' said the little boy.

'What are you here for at all?' asked his mother.

'I punishing my own self. I picked some green currants, and they went into my mouth,' said Allan.

'O, when mother told you not to! Green currants will make my little boy sick,' said his mother, in a sorry tone.

'You needn't punish me,' said Allan, 'I punish my own self.'

His mother often put him in the back parlour alone when he had been a naughty boy, and, you see, he took the same way with himself.

'Are you not sorry for disobeying mother?' she asked Allan.

'I sorry; but sorry is not 'nuff. I punish me. I stay here a good while and have thinks.'

Is not Allan right? Sorry, if it is only sorry, is not enough. How often children say they are sorry, and yet go and do the same thing again. That is a very short, shallow sorrow. Allan felt this: so he was for making serious work of it.

Child's Paper.

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'Sorry is not 'nuff.'

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WORK BEFORE PLAY.

MOTHER has sent me to the well,
To fetch a jug of water,
And I am very glad to be
A useful little daughter;
And that is why I cannot play
With you and Mary Ann to-day.

'Some afternoon I 'll come with you,
And make you wreaths and posies—
I know a place where blue-bells grow,
And daisies and primroses;
But not to-day, for I must go
And help my mother, dears, you know.

'She says that I am nearly eight,
So I can fill the kettle,
And sweep the room, and clean the grate,
And even scrub a little;
Oh! I'm so very glad to be
A useful little girl, you see.

'So, Johnny, do not ask to-day—
Perhaps I 'll come to-morrow,
But you 'd not wish me now to stay,
And give my mother sorrow:
When she can spare me, she will say,
"Now, Susan, you may go and play."'

Summer Songs.

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SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID'S DECEIT AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

AT length David grew so weary of wandering, and weary of struggling to escape from Saul, that he *said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.* So it seemed to him in his sadness of heart, but, instead of there being nothing better for him, there could really be nothing worse than to go to the Philistines without the command or permission of God.

The city of Gath, the abode of King Achish, was again the place chosen by David, and thither he went: not a lonely wanderer as before, but at the head of a band of six hundred warriors accompanied by his own two wives and the wives and families of his followers. Gath was so close to the mountains of Judah that it was a most convenient place of refuge from which David could quickly reach his native land.

On their arrival they were treated kindly by the king who, no doubt, was glad that a company of the bravest men of Israel should put themselves under his protection. *And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.* (1 Sam. xxvii. 4.) Better by far would it have been for David to be hunted, as he had said, *as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains* (xxvi. 20), than to escape from Saul by going to live among the enemies of Israel and the worshippers of Dagon.

A short time after David went to Gath, he asked for a town to be given him for the abode of himself and his people, and Achish granted his request by giving him one called Ziklag, which stood on the borders of Judah and Philistia. Here David lived for a year and four months, during which time he was joined by many more of his countrymen who wished to be free from Saul's tyrannical rule.

In return for his gift of Ziklag, Achish expected David and his men to render him service by going out to attack some of the neighbouring nations with which he was at war. Knowing that David had fled from the persecution of Saul, the King of Gath believed that he would be willing to fight against his countrymen of the kingdom of Israel, and, though David must have hated the thought of becoming such a traitor, he dare not openly refuse to comply with the wishes of his benefactor. To escape, as he supposed, from the difficulty, he was again guilty of the sin of deceit. Not far from Ziklag there still dwelt some of the Amalekites and other heathen tribes whom the people of Israel had been commanded to destroy. And against some of these people David and his men fought so successfully, that they returned to Ziklag loaded with spoil. *And David saved neither man nor woman alive* (1 Sam. xxvii. 11), and in thus cutting them off he was carrying out God's command, but, sad to say, his reason was to prevent any one from going to tell Achish what he had done to their tribe.

In other parts of the same desert wandering parties of the Amalekites still remained, and these cherished in their hearts feelings of deadly hatred against the men who had slain so many of their kindred. But why was David so desirous of keeping the king in ignorance of what had been done? One reason was that he wished Achish to suppose that the spoil had been won by attacking some of his own countrymen in the south of the tribe of Judah, bordering upon Philistia. In answer to the king's question when he saw the flocks and the herds, *Whither have ye made a road to-day?* he said, *Against the south of Judah*—and it was certainly true that he had invaded places that lay south *of* Judah; but then he made Achish believe that he had invaded those south *in* Judah. The words deceived the king, as they were intended to do, and were therefore as sinful in God's sight as an utter falsehood would have been.

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Before long the Philistines determined to invade Israel again with a large army, and king Achish, fully persuaded that David had already fought against part of his own tribe, said to him, *Know thou assuredly that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men* (xxviii. 1).

No doubt David resolved that, come what might, he would never strike one blow against a man of his own nation; but he quietly answered, *Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do.* This meant, 'Thou shalt see how I will avoid going into the battle;' but again the words were so easy to be understood in just the opposite sense, that Achish believed them to be a promise that David would distinguish himself by his bravery, and therefore Achish said to David, *I will make thee keeper of mine head for ever:* which meant, 'I will make thee captain of my life-guards, to protect me whenever I go forth to battle.'

So David and his troop joined Achish and the men of Gath, and together they marched into Saul's dominions, as far as the town of Aphek. But here they were met by the lords of the other Philistine cities, at the head of their forces, and great was their wrath when they saw that the body-guard of Achish was composed of men of Judah and Benjamin, and was led by the son-in-law of King Saul. For fear that David and his men should desert to the army of Israel, they insisted that all these Hebrews should be sent back to Ziklag, and Achish was forced to give way. He therefore sent for David, and bade him depart early next morning, as soon as it should be light enough for his journey. David asked why he must not go to the battle; but in his heart he must have felt greatly relieved at so unexpected an escape from his difficulty.

Aphek was so far from Ziklag, that it was three days before David and his followers reached the town which had been their pleasant home in Philistia, and when they arrived a terrible sight presented itself to their eyes. Some of the Amalekites knowing that Ziklag was left unprotected, had attacked and burned the town, and had carried away all the women, including David's two wives, and all the children, as well as the flocks and the herds. The sight which David's men saw on their return home was so woeful that though they were strong men of war, they all *lifted up their voice and wept until they had no more power to weep. . . . . and David was greatly distressed* (xxx. 4, 6.)

It was the greatest calamity that had yet befallen him, and it was also a time of great danger, owing to the anger of his own people. Yet we may be sure that the chief cause of David's distress was the thought that he had so grievously offended God, for now God must have seen how he had sinned since he fled to take refuge in Gath, first by his loss of faith and then by his acts and words of deceit. Yet instead of giving way to despair, *David encouraged himself in the Lord his God* (ver. 6). By this we are to understand that, after lifting up his heart to ask for pardon, he strengthened and consoled himself by thinking about the goodness and mercy of his Heavenly Father Who can bring good out of evil and peace out of trouble for those who trust in Him. How God caused David's sorrow to be turned into joy, we shall find in our next scene from his life.

THE FIREMAN'S DAUGHTER.

IN a large school, in which the pupils were assembled, and busily engaged in their work, there was a sudden alarm of fire. As usual, a terrible panic immediately ensued. In wild confusion, and with shrieks and cries, the children darted to the doors of the schoolroom, forming there a mass so dense as to render escape impossible to many.

In the struggle to get out, several of them were seriously injured; and one young lady, a teacher, rushed to an open window, and jumped out of it. Throughout this scene of confusion, one girl maintained her composure, and remained seated on the bench where she had been when the alarm was given. The colour had, indeed, forsaken her face; her lips quivered, and some tears rolled slowly down her cheeks, but not one cry, not one word, escaped: and there she sat, silent and motionless as a statue, till all danger was declared to be over. After

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David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.' P. 119.

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order had been restored, and her companions had been brought back to their places, except those who were too much hurt, or too much frightened, to resume their duties for that day, the question was asked her how it happened that she had been so composed as to sit still, when everybody else was in such a fearful state of fright? Her reply was, 'My father is a fireman: and he has told me that, if ever there was an alarm of fire in the school, I must just sit still. I thought of his words, and did as he desired me; and this was what made me stay quiet.'

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MISCHIEF.

(*Continued from p.* 99.)

CHARLIE wondered if the vicar could possibly know about the dish and the soft-water butt! 'But, continued Mr. Haldon, 'I doubt if any of you have thought that this mischief was a real sin, into which you were led by the temptation of the devil. You children do mischief very often without intending it, and so you think it is no harm, and though you are scolded and punished for doing it, you don't look upon it at all in the same way as a great many other sins which you would be quite as ashamed to commit,—such as telling a lie, or stealing. But mischief very often leads you into committing both these sins, and you see by the sentence I have read to you out of the Litany, that though you don't think mischief is any great harm, the church does, and thinks it worth praying about. By-and-bye, when you are older and wiser, you may be able to understand what a vast amount of sorrow and trouble is caused in the world by things that people do out of mere mischief. But though you cannot understand that yet, you can all understand well enough that every bit of mischief you do gives trouble to some one. Think how many hours' extra work you give your mothers by it.' Charlie remembered how often his mother would have to go backwards and forwards to the brook next washing-day to fetch soft water, now that the butt was half empty. 'How much trouble and anxiety you cause both your parents! How many quarrels between each other and between other people arise out of the mischief done by you children! Now isn't it very wrong, very sinful of you to add all these burdens to those they have to bear already, and to cause ill feeling and disputes between those who ought to be friends? Believe me, that every bit of mischief you do falls very hard on somebody, and nine times out of ten it falls hardest on your own parents, the very persons who love you most, and whom you ought to help most. Suppose one of you throws a stone and it breaks a pane of glass' (Charlie held his breath, he thought Mr. Haldon was going to say a dish), 'who has to pay for it? Suppose you tear your clothes, who has all the trouble of mending them, or to find money to buy you more?

'Will you try and think about this, my children; will you try and remember how much your thoughtlessness and carelessness, and your love of fun, add to the burden which already presses heavily on those who have the care of you? Ask God to keep you out of mischief, as well as out of sin. Once there lived in the world a Child Who never did mischief, never caused trouble or pain, or did harm to any one. You know Who that was. Ask God to make you like Jesus Christ, when He was a little child playing in the carpenter's shop, or among the flowers of Nazareth.'

The children came out of church very quietly after that sermon; each one felt as if the vicar had been preaching about him or her, and knew all the mischief they had been doing for the last six months. What he said was all true, though they had never thought of it before, and many of them determined to try and do better for the future, and keep out of mischief altogether if they could.

The procession was formed again, and away they went to a large tent which had been put up in the vicarage meadow. The hay was all cut, a great stack of it stood in a corner of the field, and the grass was short, and green, and springy, just in perfection for a good game or for any number of races.

Charlie always thought every school-feast better than the last, and that afternoon he quite longed that Johnnie could have been there to see the tables covered with piles of cake, plates of bread-and-butter, dishes of gooseberries, and currants, and raspberries, and such big nosegays of flowers, that the tent was full of their scent. The tables looked very pretty indeed as the children stood up in their places to chant the grace before tea, but when they stood up again and sang—'We thank Thee, God, for this our food,' there was nothing left to make them look pretty except the flowers. They could not be eaten, or perhaps they would

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have gone too; but everything else had disappeared. Cake, bread-and-butter, and fruit, it was all gone, and as children always become lively after a good meal, no wonder the Attercliffe scholars rushed out into the field like so many wild colts. They were soon set to play. Mr. Haldon sent the big boys to one end of the field where cricket might safely go on without fear that a stray ball would hurt anybody. The smaller ones had games of their own under the eye of the master, while the ladies took care of the girls and kept them well amused.

After a couple of hours spent in this way there was a general run towards one end of the field, and Charlie, who had been sitting down to rest by his mother, started up,—'They're going to send up the balloon! come along, Johnnie.' And taking the little boy by the hand, he led him to the place where Mr. Haldon and the master were busily preparing to send up two or three balloons of coloured paper.

(To be continued.)

WHY HUGH LEARNT TO READ.

'MOTHER,' said little Hugh Rose, 'why do you tease me so about learning to read? When I am bigger I mean to help father to fight for Prince Charlie, and one wants strong arms for that, not book-learning;' and Hugh, the little Scotch boy, looked with some pride at his well-grown limbs; for he was but ten years old.

Mistress Catherine Rose laid down her book, and, smoothing her boy's long hair off his forehead, said gently, 'Hush, dearest, I have ever told you to say that name softly, one knows not what enemy may be in hearing; but you say well that you will fight for our prince when you are old enough: still, till that time, you must do as I and your dear father would have you, and learn all those things belonging to your rank. Besides, reading and writing are always useful, so that even in them you might serve our prince; who knows?"

Little Hugh Rose lived in troublous times; King George II. reigned in England, but there were many people, both in that country and in Scotland, who believed that a prince of the line of Stuart had a better right to the throne. So thought Hugh's father, who was now away from home helping Prince Charlie in every way to recover his rights, as he believed. Little Hugh took a deep interest in the matter, as did his mother, and many a secret conversation had they about their royal master, who in this year, 1745, had just landed in Scotland.

Hugh was a good boy, brave and trusty, but he did hate book-learning; when, however, his mother told him that by learning he might possibly help his dear Prince Charlie, he set seriously to work, for really he was very backward and ignorant. Through the tedious time of his father's absence he toiled on, anxious to please him on his return, and, at last, to his own great joy, he found himself able, not only to read printed books, but also to spell out his father's short and hurried letters to his mother.

One day, however, he found his mother crying bitterly; terrible news had come, Prince Charlie had fought a great battle, had been defeated, and was now wandering about with a price of 30,000*l.* offered for his life. Hugh's father wrote that he would never leave the Prince till he saw him safe out of the country; but he begged Mistress Catherine to send him money, and from time to time he would let her know where it would find him.

This was a dangerous business; for any one known to be friendly to Prince Charlie was strictly watched, in the hopes of obtaining a clue to the Prince himself. Mistress Catherine soon saw that she was watched, and she wrote to her husband to bid him send her no more letters, but direct them to an old servant of hers who now lived in the nearest town, with a family who were adherents of King George's. She dare not fetch them from thence herself, neither dare she trust her servants, however faithful, as they were suspected also; so she hit on the plan of sending little Hugh to school in the town, bidding

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him from time to time visit old Martha, and ask had she aught for his mother.

One day, however, poor Hugh had a great fright; he was met by some rough men, who with stern voices demanded from him any letters or papers he might have about him; happily Hugh had nothing of the sort that day, but the men searched him, and angrily bid him take care for the future, as they believed his school-going was a trick to gain news in the town. From that day, however, Mistress Catherine bade her boy carry no more letters, but read them carefully, and give them the good Martha to burn; poor lady, she could hardly help crying at the thought that she might never herself look on her husband's handwriting, all that was now left her of him, but it was necessary. As for Hugh, his heart beat, and his cheeks flushed; here was a reward for his months of toil at his weary spelling-book; he was his mother's trusted messenger, able to read the letters she could not obtain, and so in a small measure serve his father and his prince. 'Mother!' he burst eagerly into the room one day on his return from the town; 'mother,' and he lowered his voice, 'they are on the coast, and expect a vessel soon, but they must have money again; old Donald will be in the cave to-morrow night for it; oh, may I take it to him?' But Mistress Catherine shook her head and kissed her boy. 'That is my part, darling; but look up, you have done much, my Hugh; thank God you learnt to read, it has been of the greatest service to us.' Little Hugh lay down in his bed that night and slept sweetly; while in the beating rain his mother stole out to the cave in the hill-side, where old Donald, her husband's faithful servant, waited at the risk of his life for the money which was to carry the unfortunate prince to safer lands.

And when Hugh's father at last returned to his family, poor, and disappointed at his prince's failure to obtain his rights, he was cheered by his boy's bright face and whispered greeting,—'Dear, dear father, I am so happy you are come back; our prince's life is safe, and I helped to save it a little; didn't I? Mother says I did.' H. A. F.

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THE DISCONTENTED BOY.

LITTLE Arthur Nunn was a discontented boy, always wishing for something he had not got, or longing to change places with some one whom he fancied better off than himself. He had wished himself a king, the Prince of Wales, a giant, a coachman, an organ-grinder, and a pedlar, one after the other. Now his great wish was to change places with the little son of the lord who had lately come to live in the great house near the village. He had just caught a glimpse of the boy as he was whisked by one day in a splendid carriage, and he wearied his father and mother with his lamentations over the fine clothes and beautiful toys, which little Lord Frederick enjoyed, and which he, poor Arthur Nunn, could only look at from a distance. 'If I only were Lord Frederick, I should be quite happy,' he wound up with; 'why, mother, as he sits in his carriage he is almost smothered with lovely toys.'

Mrs. Nunn shook her head. 'At your old tricks, Arthur,' she said, 'envying other people, I thought you said you had done with that since the pedlar talked to you, and told you the many miles he had to walk to earn an honest penny.'

'Ah, but this is a real lord I want to be this time,' said Arthur; 'he can always ride in a carriage, and have fine clothes and playthings. I wish I could see him nearer, and ask him if he is not quite happy; he must be, I am sure.'

Lord Frederick and his parents had only lately come to live in the great house, and the villagers knew very little about them, save seeing them take their daily drive. Arthur's father, James Nunn, was gardener at the house, and he told his wife that sad stories were whispered about the great folk and their only child, but Arthur heard nothing of this.

One day, Arthur was greatly surprised to see his father come down

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the village leading little Lord Frederick by the hand; the boy was dressed in velvet and feathers, and dragged after him a gilded toy carriage. Arthur gave a cry of joy, and would have rushed out after his father, but his mother called him back, told him to stay in the house, and shut the garden gate. Arthur was vexed, but his mother would not let him follow them. Presently his father came in, looking very grave; but Arthur never noticed this, he began to ask many questions about the little lord, repeating his old wish that he could change places with such a happy boy.

Then James Nunn called his boy to him, and said, 'Arthur, pray God He may never heed your foolish wishes; listen to me, that boy in velvet and feathers, with toys and carriages, and everything money can buy, is a poor creature with no sense. God help his poor father and mother.'

When Arthur went to bed that night, his mother came and sat by him and told him all she knew about the poor boy at the great house. He had never had any sense; some fits he had in his babyhood had made him quite an idiot, and now when vexed or contradicted he was sure to have another fit, so that his parents were obliged to indulge him; and when he saw James Nunn in the garden, and screamed to go a walk with him, they were compelled to let him go; happily, James was a man whose heart was filled with real pity for the afflicted child and his parents, and he found little difficulty in managing his poor charge. It was not the last time he had to do so, for Lord Frederick took a great fancy to him, and Arthur often met his father in the park, leading about and amusing the poor little lord he so envied.

If Arthur is ever tempted now to wish himself in any one else's place, a glance at the sorrowful faces of Lord Frederck's parents or at the idiot child himself, is enough to cure him; he sees now plainly that every one has some trouble, and that instead of blindly wishing to escape the small trials God has sent him, he ought to try and bear them quietly, thankful that he is free from the greater afflictions which some of God's children have to suffer.

H. A. F.

THE TWO BELLS AND THE SPANIEL.

A FABLE ABOUT MINDING ONE'S OWN BUSINESS.

TWO Bells hung side by side in the villa of an Indian judge, who had returned to end his days in London. One of them was called the 'Visitors' Bell;' and the other went by the name of the 'Servants' Bell.' They were bells who had a great deal to say for themselves: but the Servants' Bell was most talkative in the morning, whereas the Visitors' Bell seldom spoke a word before the afternoon. One day, however, as it chanced, they both rang at the same moment; and for a few seconds the noise was so great, that Tippoo, the Spaniel, could scarcely hear himself bark.

'What did you mean by interrupting me?' said the Visitors' Bell to the Servants' Bell, when the tumult had subsided; 'I thought you had been better bred.'

'It was the fishmonger's boy with the salmon for the judge's dinner,' answered the Servants' Bell; 'but pray what could you be thinking of to commence business so early in the day? Are you sure you are awake yet?'

'Yours is a very saucy tongue, said the Visitors' Bell. 'It was that Mr. Moneybags whom the judge is always so glad to see. A pretty sort of house this would be without money!' added the Bell, in a voice which quivered with indignation.

'And a pretty sort of house it would be without butcher's meat and fish!' returned the Servants' Bell with a toss of the head.

'You are too insolent!' said the other.

'Your pride will have a fall,' said the Servants' Bell.

'Bow! wow! wow!' said Tippoo the Spaniel, looking up at that moment. 'What, have not you Bells done jangling yet? What is it all about?'

And the Bells began to tell Tippoo all their sorrows.

'Pray hold your tongues,' said the dog,

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'and let me beg of you not to speak again until you are spoken to,—like good Bells. I am myself to blame for barking at you as I did just now, but I shall know better another time. I perceive that each of us should keep his own place, and mind his own business.'—*A Home Book for Children.*

WHY?

EVERYBODY seems to love me!
I wonder what the reason is
That everybody is so kind?
They all shake hands or give a kiss,
You 'd think that I was ill or blind,
Or very good, or very pretty,—
I wonder if its love or pity?

Everybody seems to love me!
When I'm playing with the babies—
(Mother has got twins, you know)
All the gentlemen and ladies
Stop and pet and praise me so.
But what it is I cannot see,
That makes them all so fond of me.

Everybody seems to love me;
If I'm working, or I'm playing,
Fetching wood or water home,
Or if I'm in the garden staying,
All the same they make me come.
For everybody seems to like me,
The reason of it fails to strike me.

Father loves me, mother loves me,
Mother says I'm her right hand;
And all the sisters and my brother,
When we round the table stand,
At tea or dinner with our mother
And our father, all take care
That I shall have the largest share.

All the schoolboys seem to like me;
I wonder why they should do so?
I never try to make them care,
And yet I have not got a foe;
I don't believe a fellow's there
But would say I was his friend;
I wonder when it all will end?

THE REASON WHY.

Everyone will always love him,
Unselfish, humble, gentle boy;
Loving, serving all around,
Minist'ring to others' joy,
Like dew or sunlight on the ground,
Seeking not his own but theirs,
His Maker's seal he surely wears.

J. E. C. F.

THE RABBIT'S NEST.

IT is seldom that one has an opportunity to watch and sketch such a little family-party as the one in our picture; as generally the Rabbit loves to make its downy nest in the darkest corner of its dark bed-chamber. And if you open it and look too long at the little dears, Mrs. Rabbit is very liable to desert them, and sometimes even to gobble them up. There was no such fear, however, with the good-natured, large-eyed, lop-eared, fawn doe, to which these nestlings belonged. She lived in a little walled house, large enough for a pig-stye, which her owner, a good lad, had himself built for her. The nest was made of an abundance of wool from the old Rabbit's own body, kept together, where there was no wall, by an old feeding-trough, which he had dragged there.

If I attempted to touch the mother, or approached the nest with my fingers, she struck at me with her fore-legs, after the manner of deer, or kangaroos. After a good supply of mallows and cabbage-leaves she flopped herself down, regularly tumbling over, head foremost on her side like a happy child that goes to bed, and there she went to sleep alongside of the nest. But it was sleep with one eye open, for if I stirred in the least she was on the watch, ready to feed or fight. The little ones would sometimes shift, stretch, yawn, rest their heads on each other, and one little black-and-white one had a great weakness for lying on its side like its mother. The other little black-and-white one was very enterprising, and actually crept about two inches out of the nest after the doe. I took two home for a few hours to sketch from; they were such good little things, and licked the hand in which they were held to keep them in a certain position.

When I brought them back they were welcomed by the doe, and their little excursion did them no harm. I have seen them since, and they will soon be big enough to live without their mother, and

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The Rabbit's Nest.

two of them will belong to us. I was so pleased with the kind old doe that I asked her owner to let me have the refusal of her in case she is to be got rid of. I hope her picture will appear soon in the *Prize*.

F. W. K.

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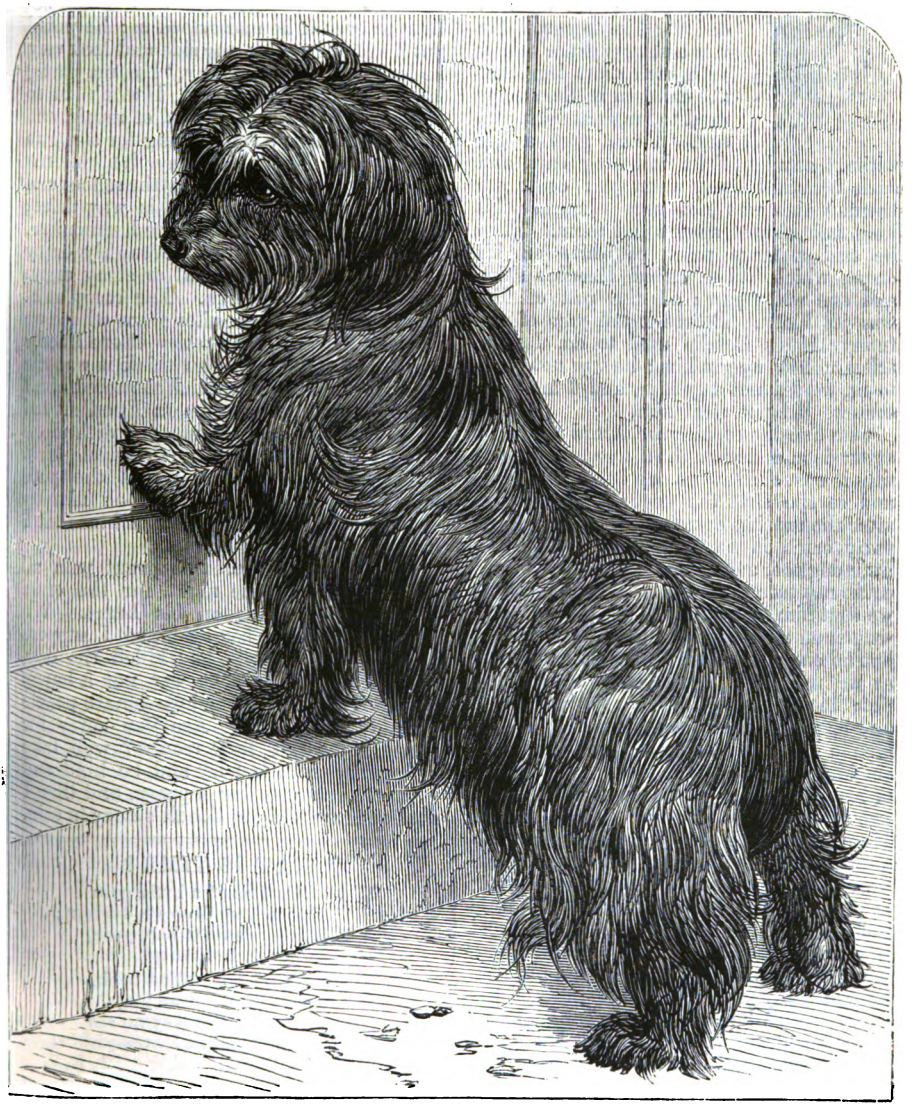
THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IX.] SEPTEMBER, 1870. [One Penny.



Bootle-Jack, by F. W. KEYL.

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BOODLE-JACK.

I WISH you could have seen our little dog Boodle, but as you can never do that now, I will try and describe him to you. He was a shaggy little fellow with such short legs that the children in the streets used to laugh at him, and say, 'There goes a dog without any legs!' he had long ears, and such beautiful eyes, when you could see them, which was not very often, as his long hair almost always hid them. Then he had a large patch of white on his chest, which Willie called Boodle's shirt, and one white paw; all the rest of him was jet black. Before I tell you of the funny things Boodle used to do, I must tell you how we got him; he was not given to us, we did not buy him, and I am quite sure we did not steal him.

One Sunday evening we heard a tapping at our door, and when the servant went to see who it was, she saw no one but a little dog, and so she shut the door; a few minutes after the tapping came again, and when the party came in from church, in came the little dog too, and as it was a cold night, we could not turn him out. The next morning we sent him out, but back he came again; we put an advertisement in the newspaper, but no one ever claimed him. Boodle-Jack, as we named him, soon became a great pet; he would do all sorts of tricks, sit up and beg with spectacles on his nose and a pipe in his mouth, and when he was tired of smoking, instead of letting the pipe fall out of his mouth, he would take it between his two paws and put it gently on the ground. He believed if he only begged he would get anything he wanted; we saw him several times when he was alone in a room begging in front of the washhand-stand, his little red tongue hanging out of his mouth—oh! so thirsty. Boodle was a dainty little dog, if we offered him anything he did not like, he ran away and sat in a corner of the room; didn't he love biscuits?—he would have eaten a whole tinful if we had given him a chance, but then we never did.

Our house was at the sea-side. Boodle would go to the beach with us, but directly we went near a bathing-machine off he ran. We had taken him once to bathe, and he did not like it; we told him to wait, we would never put him in again, but he did not believe us even if he understood us; he would put his little head on one side and look very knowing, as much as to say, 'No, no, young ladies, I trusted you once, I won't do so again.' Boodle was very fond of music, and that you know is a funny thing for a dog to care about. Every Saturday the children practised the Sunday hymns at the school, and Boodle nearly always found his way there; he would lie by the side of the harmonium, never bark or whine, but thoroughly enjoy the music; any brass band or stray organ had attractions for him. The camp at S. was only two or three miles from where we lived, and on any grand review there Boodle was to be seen. Do you think it was the music or the red coats which attracted him?

And now I must tell you Boodle's sad end. One day when he was out with me, a spiteful boy gave him a dreadful kick, saying, 'Get out of my way;' the poor little dog howled terribly, I took him up gently, and was so grieved about him that I did not see the boy run off.

Poor Boodle lingered in great pain all day and died in the night, for the cruel boy had kicked him on his heart. We could not find the boy again, so I suppose he never knew that he had killed the dog, but I am quite sure he was not a happy boy, for bad-tempered and passionate people never can be happy. Are you sorry for Boodle's sad fate, little reader? well, take a lesson from it, and try and be kind and gentle to your own dog or pussy, and then I shall not have told you Boodle's story in vain.

WHAT IS TIME?

WHAT is Time? a little gem
Taken from Mercy's diadem;
And, if thou would'st happy be,
Darken not its brilliancy.

What is Time? a sullied book,
Every page whereon we look
Bears a stain. Oh, may no sin
Of thine be found its leaves within!

J. E. J.

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MISCHIEF.

(*Continued from page* 123.)

'T'S quite safe, sir,' the master was saying, 'the wind will carry them over the Common, they cannot hurt anything.'

'That's well,' replied the vicar, 'I don't think we have anything near likely to catch, except my haystack. I should not like to have that burnt. Suppose we go lower down the field to make it *quite* safe.'

The move was made, and in a few minutes the children were clapping their hands and shouting with delight, as one after another the balloons rose slowly into the air. One toppled over before it had gone far, and was burnt directly, but the others sailed away over the Common. Soon afterwards the feast came to an end, and the children, hoarse with shouting, trooped off to their homes.

Mrs. Benson had taken Johnnie away directly the balloons had been sent up, for he was getting tired and sleepy, so Charlie walked down the road with some of the lads who were going his way.

'I say,' said Bob Collins, a clever boy, but full of mischief,—'I say, weren't those balloons fun? I have seen them done lots of times, and I know I could manage it quite as well as Master and Mr. Haldon. Wouldn't it be a lark to have one of our own?'

'But we haven't got any of the things to do it with,' said one of the boys.

'Haven't we though? I've been thinking about it ever so long; look here!'

And Bob took from his pocket something which did not look very unlike a balloon in shape, though it was made of newspaper instead of tissue paper, but there was the wire framework, and the bit of sponge, and Bob, with great pride, showed the top of a little bottle of naphtha peeping out of his pocket.

'However did you get it?' cried the boys.

'Never you mind how I got it; there it is. Now, if you want a lark let the other chaps go on, and then we'll cut off to some quiet place, and have a spree.'

'Where shall we go, Bob?' asked one of the party; 'best be somewhere near the Common.'

'All right, we'll get into the field next the vicarage meadow, no one will see us there, and we shall be close to the Common.'

Charlie hesitated whether he should go or not. It was very tempting, and Bob said it couldn't do any harm. But still Charlie could not help feeling as if he were going to do mischief, and he remembered that he had not thought of breaking the dish when he threw stones at the cat; besides, Mr. Haldon's sermon was not forgotten, and he did want to keep out of mischief for the future; so he put in a feeble protest, but he was told he need not come if he was afraid, which taunt settled the question, and before they reached the field Charlie was as eager as any of them.

'Look here,' said Bob, 'creep along under the hedge till you get to the haystack; we shall be all right there,' and they were soon seated on the ground, under shelter of the rick.

'Now, Bob, be quick! it's getting late, and we shall catch it if we are not home soon.'

'All right!' cried Bob, hurriedly striking a match; 'it will be off directly.' He set the spirit on fire, and threw down the match without seeing where it fell. The boys were all intent on the balloon, but it didn't go up as it ought.

'It's not right somehow,' said Bob, half ready to cry at his failure.

'Perhaps there's not enough stuff out of the bottle on it,' suggested one of the boys.

Bob shook his head.

'It's not that—I'm afraid the paper is too heavy, it ought to have been thin, like what they use.'

And he jerked his head towards the vicarage, still intently looking at his balloon.

Charlie glanced round, and then he sprang to his feet with a scream.

'Hold your noise, what's up?' exclaimed Bob, angrily.

But the other boys had turned at Charlie's cry, and a shout of 'The stack's on fire!' almost drowned his words.

Bob made a dash at the fire, and tried to tear out the burning hay; but it was

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tightly packed, and at the very bottom of the rick.

'Kick it out, can't you,' he screamed to the others who had been too frightened to move. They made a vain attempt to stifle the little blaze (it was but a little one), with their boots, they stamped against the smouldering side of the stack, perspiration pouring down their faces from terror. But it was no use; as if to mock them a tongue of flame shot up by the ends of the hay almost to the top of the rick.

'It's no use, we must cut,' cried Bob; and hastily gathering up the remains of his balloon he set off running, too frightened to think of anything but escaping detection. But Charlie and another lad had already set off across the vicarage field, and Mr. Haldon was met in his garden by two breathless lads only just able to gasp out,—

'Please, sir, we've set your rick on fire.'

True enough, as the vicar could see, for the smoke was beginning to rise.

'Run on and tell the men,' he cried.

But even as he spoke he knew there was nothing to be done. A month of hot weather, the hay as dry as tinder, and a fresh westerly breeze to fan the flames, were all against saving the stack. Plenty of men were soon on the spot, but they could only see it burn.

'There goes eighty pounds,' said Mr. Haldon, sighing; 'it's a practical commentary on my sermon, eh, Laura!' and he drew his daughter's arm within his own, for all the inmates of the vicarage had come out to see the fire.

'Oh, father, how did it happen?'

'Charlie Benson said, "Please, sir, we've set your rick on fire." That's all I know.'

'Those wicked boys!—what a shame!'

'I don't suppose they did it on purpose, my dear. We shall find it was, like most other mischief, the result of carelessness and want of thought. Lucky they didn't burn my home down instead of my stack.'

But though Mr. Haldon spoke cheerfully, the loss was very serious, for hay was dear that season, and the stack was a large one.

At this moment a policeman stepped forward, holding Charlie by the arm.

'This is one of the boys that did it, sir,' he said, touching his hat. 'Do you wish to give them in charge?'

To be sent to prison! Charlie had never thought of it before, but he knew the vicar might send him there, and he shook with terror as he felt the policeman's grasp upon his arm.

'Oh, sir, do forgive me, we didn't mean any harm, we'll never do it again—oh—oh, oh,' sobbed Charlie.

'Come, stop crying, Benson,' said Mr. Haldon, sternly, 'and tell the truth. How did it happen?'

So Charlie had to tell his story as best he could, and in the midst of it up came Bob Collins, who was no coward, though he had run away at first; and, hearing that the policeman had got hold of Charlie, he came to clear him of blame by taking the mischief on himself.

'None of them touched the matches but me, sir, so they couldn't have set it alight. I was trying to make a balloon go up, and I suppose I dropped a match near the hay. I ought to go to prison, sir, not Benson; he only came to see the fun.'

'But nearly the only one who had the sense and pluck to come and tell what he had done,' replied Mr. Haldon. 'Well, Collins, you've got your lesson now, I fancy, and I shall let the master punish you. I suspect he will make them all remember it,' he continued, turning to the policeman, 'so I shall not give them in charge.'

'You're kinder than they deserve, sir,' replied the officer.

But though they were not sent to prison the boys were severely punished both by the schoolmaster and by their own parents. Charlie and Collins took their thrashings in good part—they knew they had thoroughly deserved them. But the worst part of their punishment was knowing that Mr. Haldon had to sell his horse and walk many a weary mile over the muddy winter roads because he could not afford to replace the burnt hay-rick. They never saw him pass home, looking weary and tired, without feeling ashamed of themselves, and remembering the words of the school-feast sermon, that 'every bit of mischief they did was sure to fall heavily on some one.'

C. H. B.

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MADE TO BE AN ANGEL.

'WELL, I don't know as I was made for anything,' said a little girl, as she walked along the street with a downcast look; a look that it is sad to see upon the face of a little girl,—a little girl who seems made for pleasure and happiness. 'Yes, maybe I was not made for anything,' she repeated; and she drew her sun-bonnet over her face, and the tears trickled down like an April shower over her cheeks.

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'Mother says I'm always in the way, always good for nothing; and Will scolds me all the day: maybe I was not made for anything. I don't see what I was put into the world for, then. I wish I never had been;' and she sat down upon a mossy bank by the side of the road.

The birds were singing around her, the grasshoppers chirping in the grass, the flowers shedding sweet perfume in the air, the little brook trickling over the stones; all seemed to be made for something except her, she thought.

Poor little girl! a sad home she had in an old hut, with her drunken mother and unkind brother. The more she tried to please them, the more they complained of her; till, that bright morning when every little girl should have been happy, she had taken her old sun-bonnet and wandered off far from home. What mattered it whether she ever went back or not? it would only be to meet cross words and blows.

Again her lips parted, as she leaned her head upon the soft moss-patch, and she said in a sorrowful tone, 'The birds and everything are made for something; why wasn't I? No, I was not made for anything.'

Just then a kind lady passed, who was touched by the little girl's sad tone; and, bending over her, she said, in a gentle tone, 'Yes, little one, you were made for something. You were made to be a little angel in heaven.'

The little girl turned her sad face toward her, as if doubting what she had heard; and said, 'Mother says I was not made for anything.'

'But you are,' the kind lady added; 'you are made to be a little angel in Heaven.'

'But where is Heaven?' she asked. 'Can I go there now?'

And then the lady told her all about that happy place; and how the blessed Jesus left His throne of glory, and came down upon earth, and took little children in His arms, and blessed them; and how He died a cruel death, that they might become little angels in Heaven.

And the little girl dried her tears, and smiled. She had forgotten her unhappy home; for it was the first time she had ever heard of Jesus: her mother had never taught her about God or Heaven.

'And can I be a little angel, too? Oh, I should like to be one, and see Jesus,' she said.

Then the kind lady told her she could, if she would love Jesus; and she gave her a little book that told all about Heaven, and how she might get there; and the poor child looked happy: she *was* made for something.

Taking her little book, she trudged home; and when her mother called her a 'good-for-nothing thing,' and said 'she was not made for anything,' she would say to herself 'Yes, I was made to be a little angel in Heaven;' and then she would ask Jesus to take her there, and let her be an angel.

It was kind in that good lady to cheer the heart of that lonely little one by telling her of Jesus; for ofttimes she went to bed cold and supperless: but she would look up to the little stars; she thought they were bright, just like Heaven, and that, perhaps, the angels were looking down upon her, and would some day come and take her away to be an angel, too, in Heaven.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID'S KINDNESS TO THE EGYPTIAN.

WHEN David recovered from the shock caused by the misery which he found that the Amalekites had wrought at Ziklag in his absence, although every minute was of consequence, he would not set out till the high-priest had inquired of the Lord whether David should pursue the Amalekites or not. The answer from God was, *Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all* (1 Sam. xxx. 8).

Then, ceasing their murmurs and their threats to stone him, David's men set out with him, and so swiftly did they march, that on reaching the brook Besor no less than two hundred became too faint to go

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any farther, so David left them there with the baggage.

On their way David's men saw a poor Egyptian lad lying exhausted on the ground and almost dead. Though they were so eager to recover their wives and children, and though they had only a small supply of food for themselves, *they brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread nor drunk any water three days and three nights. And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou?* (11–13.) The lad answered that he was the slave of one of those Amalekites who had plundered Ziklag, and that during their return three days before with all the spoil his master had left him to die in the field, because he was too ill to keep up with the rest. No doubt the hard-hearted Amalekite thought that he should have slaves enough from amongst the captives, and that he need not trouble himself about this lad, but it proved that his cruelty led to the destruction of the whole troop to which he belonged, while David's kindness to the poor slave led to the rescue of the women and children for whom he and his men were seeking.

David asked the lad, *Canst thou bring me down to this company?* Then he said, *Swear unto me by God that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.* The promise was solemnly given, and then he guided David and his followers to the place where the tents had been set up. The Amalekites supposed that David was still with the army of the Philistines in a distant part of the land of Israel, so they were quite off their guard, and were *eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines and out of the land of Judah.* David and his four hundred men at once rushed in among them, and slew them all except some young men, also four hundred in number, who escaped by riding away upon camels.

After joyously greeting their wives and children, the conquerors returned home with every person and thing that had been taken from Ziklag, besides treasures and flocks and herds from other places. These animals were driven in front of the triumphal procession by some of David's men who cried as they went along, 'This is David's spoil,' perhaps because they wished to show their regret for having murmured and rebelled against their leader when they had discovered their loss at Ziklag.

Near the brook Besor their two hundred comrades came forward to meet them, and David, instead of reproaching these men for their weakness, cheered them by promising that, although they had not been engaged in the battle, they should still receive their share of the spoil. The more selfish and covetous of the four hundred warriors were greatly displeased, and said that those who had stayed behind ought only to have their families restored to them, and ought to leave the spoil for those who had won it in battle. But David said, *Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us, who hath preserved us and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter?* And then he ordered that those who had done one kind of service in guarding the baggage, which some enemy might otherwise have taken, should be rewarded equally with those who had engaged in the more active service of defeating the enemy on the battle-field. This was what God had commanded their forefathers (Num. xxxi. 27), and though the law had not always been obeyed, yet from that day forward it was carefully kept in Israel.

From his own share of the spoil the grateful and generous David sent presents to the friends who had helped him and his followers in various ways during their wanderings in the wilderness, and in order that they might join him in his thanksgiving to God for the victory, he sent with his gifts a message saying, *Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord* (verse 26).

Very plainly does the account of the ex-

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David's kindness to the Egyptian.

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Going to Bed. P. 138.

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pedition against the Amalekites prove that David was blessed with that benevolence which is the sunlight of God's own love shining in the heart and showing itself in the deeds, and words, and thoughts of his faithful servants. Kind deeds to the poor deserted Egyptian slave—kind words to cheer the dispirited men who could not reach the enemy's camp—kind words to soothe those who were angry and excited about the spoil—kind thoughts of the friends who had helped him in his wanderings—all these are described in the history of these two or three days of David's anxious life! *Our* lives may give us no chance of doing great services such as that which David rendered the Egyptian, but almost every hour of every day brings us opportunities of doing little acts or saying little words that will help and cheer others, and will be seen and accepted by our kind Father in heaven.

THE LITTLE BOY'S GOOD-NIGHT.

THE sun is hidden from our sight,
The birds are sleeping sound;
'Tis time to say to all 'Good-night!'
And give a kiss all round.

Good-night, my father, mother, dear,
Now kiss your little son;
Good-night! my friends, both far and near,
Good-night to every one.

Good-night, ye merry, merry birds,
Sleep well till morning light;
Perhaps, if you could sing in words,
You would have said 'Good-night!'

To all my pretty flowers, good-night—
You blossom while I sleep!
And all the stars that shine so bright,
With you their watches keep.

The moon is lighting up the skies,
The stars are sparkling there;
'Tis time to shut our weary eyes,
And say our evening prayer.

ELIZA LEE FOLLEN.

THE MAGPIE.

A FABLE ABOUT CONSCIENCE.

ONE day a noisy Magpie came to settle in the quiet village of Barnham. He was on the look-out for a house; and there was an old hawthorn near Farmer Weston's stable, of which he thought a good deal.

Now this Magpie would get a meal wherever he could, for he was the most unscrupulous of birds. Sometimes it would be a fine fat beetle which had crawled out into the sun; sometimes a lazy slug which had been tempted out by the rain; and now and then, when he was inclined to be industrious, he would dig for grubs amongst the roots of the grass or the sprouting corn. And as Farmer Weston could have no objection to this, our Magpie went screaming about everywhere like an impudent bird as he was.

One fine morning, however, the farmer's wife brought out a dozen young ducklings for their first swim round the pond.

'Take care of your little ones,' said the good wife, 'for I must go and see after the milking.'

'Quack! quack!' said the mother Duck; as much as to say, 'You may depend upon me.' But I am afraid she was not to be depended upon, after all. For no sooner was Mrs. Weston's back turned than the Magpie came screaming to the water's edge to know what was the matter. 'Quack! quack!' said the mother Duck; 'look at my young family!' and off she swam without once turning her head to see what this cunning Magpie was after.

Now the Magpie was very hungry that morning, having been so extremely busy getting together some clay for a house, that he really had not had time to dig for a grub. All at once it occurred to him, 'Those ducks look very good: that little fellow, for instance, who has got behind the stone.' And he screamed for joy. The mother Duck turned her head, but it was too late now; for the Magpie was off with the poor little duckling in his cruel beak. What a breakfast had the Magpie that morning!

After breakfast he went back to the hawthorn, where he had already collected

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a quantity of turf and clay; and he said to himself, 'I must mind what I am about, for I have got enemies now. That old duck will never forgive me.' So he laid his sticks cross-wise in the thickest part of the hawthorn. He made a roof of the very sharpest thorns interwoven with each other. He fortified himself above, below, and on all sides; and all day as he wrought at his task, he kept turning his head over his shoulders, now on this side now on that, to look for the mother Duck. Even when the house was finished, and he slept in it the first time, he awoke in the middle of the night and rubbed his eyes, simply because he thought he heard a voice saying, 'Quack! quack! what have you done with my ducklings?'—*The Home-Book for Children.*

FIRST LOVE.

LITTLE Johanna used to read a chapter of the Bible to her mother every morning.

One morning she read the fourth chapter of the First Epistle of John. When she arrived at the nineteenth verse, she read,—

'*We love Him because He first loved us.*'

'Whom do we love?' asked her mother.

'God the Lord,' answered Johanna.

'And who loved us first?' asked her mother.

'God the Lord,' answered Johanna. 'But,' added she, 'what does it mean, *He loved us first?*'

'It means,' said her mother, 'that God loved us long before we loved Him. When you were born, you could not love God. You were a little baby, and you knew nothing of God. Still God loved you, and He took you into His family in your baptism, He gave you your parents, and a cradle to sleep in, and clothes to put on. And when you grew up you were often a naughty girl, cross, and disobedient, and sinning against the Lord, yet God loved you, though you did not love Him. He gave you bread and meat, health and strength; He caused the sun to rise on you; He gave you toys and playthings; He caused you to be told of the Lord Jesus, Who came to earth a long time ago to make you happy, and prepare you for heaven. All this God did before you loved Him. Which loved first, God or you?'

'I see,' said Johanna: 'God loved first.'

'Now, don't forget it,' said the mother. 'Remember that now you ought to love and serve God in return.'

That same afternoon little Mary, Johanna's cousin, paid her a visit. Mary was not a good girl; she always liked to take everything to herself. When other children had anything nice, she always quarrelled till they gave it to her, Now, Johanna had a fine doll, which she liked very much. But Mary liked it too, and wanted to play with it. Johanna refused to give it up; she was afraid that Mary might not give it back. Mary began fretting, and crying. She seated herself on a chair, covered her eyes with her little apron, and refused to play any more.

Johanna went to her mother, who was sitting in another room.

'Mary is a naughty girl,' she said: 'she won't play any more. She doesn't love me.'

'Do you wish her to love you?' asked her mother.

'Yes, I do,' answered Johanna.

'Then you ought to deal with her as God dealt with you. You ought to love her first.'

Johanna was silent. She saw that her mother was right. She returned to her little cousin, and, giving her the doll, said,—

'There, Mary dear, take it, and let us play together.'

Mary at once looked kind and cheerful. Johanna helped her to dress and undress the doll, and did everything to please her. Mary was delighted; she enjoyed that afternoon very much.

When Mary returned home, she said to her mother,—

'What a good girl Johanna is: I am very fond of her. Will you let me give her that picture which I bought with my saving-money the other day?'

The mother gladly gave her permission, and wondered that Mary could so easily part with her treasure. She thought, It seems that Johanna makes a very good im-

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Johanna and Mary.

pression upon my little daughter. I never saw her so liberal and kind-hearted.

The next day Mary gave the picture to Johanna.

Johanna went to her mother and showed her the beautiful picture.

'Could you ever dream,' said she, 'that Mary would give such a thing to me?'

'Oh yes,' answered her mother, with a smile. 'There is nothing too much to expect if we begin loving first.'—*The Postman's Bag.*

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THE MILL-STREAM.

A CHILD looks into the mill-stream,
Where fish glide in and out,
The dace with the coat of silver,
And the crimson-spotted trout.

He plays with the diamond waters,
He talks to the droning bees,
He sings, and the birds sing with him,
He runs as to catch the breeze.

A perfume from wood and meadow
Is wandering round the boy;
He is twining a garland of lilacs,
And joyous he thinks not of joy.

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He prays in the eve and morning,—
For the heavens seem always near;
And he thinks that each childish murmur
Is a charm that the angels hear.

O life! O beautiful picture!
O light, and perfume, and love!
O the grace of the heart that is tender!
O the dream that can lift us above!

O life! no longer a problem,
But a something to see and enjoy,
A brightness on stream and on meadow,
A breeze round a dancing boy!

Back, back to the fair blue morning
Of wild hope, and of fancy wild;
Let me watch the fish in the mill-stream,
With the eyes and the heart of a child.

Fraser's Magazine.

THE DOG WHO KNEW WHAT IT WAS TO BE FORGIVEN.

I WAS once on the beautiful 'Seventh Lake,' when our hunter was very anxious to procure a deer. Our larder was very low. So he planned that he would take his dog Fannie, and go out on the mountain a mile or more distant, and start a deer, with the hope that the dog would run it into the lake. But when he got on the mountain, for some reason or other Fannie refused to hunt! She would go off a few yards and return again. He put her on the track, and she would run a little way and then come back. Getting out of patience he cut a tough stick and whipped the animal almost without mercy. The consequence was that she took to her legs and went howling over the mountain. He came back to us disappointed, vexed, and sad—disappointed, because we should have no venison; vexed because he did not command his temper; and sad, because he feared he had driven off the dog for ever. For three days we neither saw nor heard of her. Then a deer came into the lake close to us. Where it came from, or what drove it in, we knew not, as we heard no cry of any dog. But as we were on the sandy beach about two hours after this, what should we see but poor Fan, creeping towards her master, dragging herself along on the sand, and uttering a low, plaintive whine! Her master stood still, and slower and slower the poor thing creeped and crouched towards him. Would she be beaten again? I never saw meekness and contrition more plainly expressed. It was painful. When within about three yards, and while trying to read his face, her master snapped his finger, and in a mild, forgiving, cheerful voice, simply said, 'Fannie!' In an instant she leaped up, bounded toward him. The expression of her face and the tones of her bark were entirely changed. She bounded, and leaped, and barked for joy! *She was forgiven!* She was pardoned! She was received back to the good-will, and restored to the confidence of her master! The loudest words, could she have talked, could not have been more expressive. She felt forgiveness.

And this was the joy of forgiveness! Many a child has felt it when he has done wrong and offended his father. The poor animal knew that she could not be happy alone in the woods, day after day shut away from her master. She felt that she had done wrong, and there was no way but to throw herself on the mercy of her offended friend. The child must do just so. So David did when he had sinned and God had turned away His face from him. So St. Peter did when he had denied his blessed Redeemer. So the Prodigal Son did when he returned and fell on his knees before his father, and cried, 'Father, I have sinned.' Fannie did not, and could not feel sure that her master would forgive her and receive her into his favour; but she went to him and begged for mercy. She did not know the name of the feeling, but she felt its joy!

THE EVE OF THE BIRTHDAY.

IT was the custom of certain children I once knew, to keep a high festival every year on the 21st of May. It was the birthday of one of the party, a happy light-hearted girl much loved by her companions. Indeed she was, and still is, one of those whose blessed lot it is to be loved; so as this

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birthday fell in the 'merry, merry month of May,' in the bright sunny weather, it was always a very popular holiday.

Now, as is the case with days of much higher import, so with this family festival, it had its 'eve.' On the afternoon of the 20th of May, lessons being well over, and dinner done, it was the habit of these children to go with a great supply of baskets, scissors, and string, to the Hatch woods, to gather primroses, blue-bells, cowslips, and all the flowers they could find, which being carefully packed into the baskets were carried home.

Then, with the help of the gardener's boy, two strong hoops were procured, and they set to work to make a splendid double garland, which was to be finished if possible that evening. A deputation went forth into the garden, where the kind father was working, to beg for a few of his tulips and polyanthus flowers to form the crest; the dear mother contributed a bright ribbon to tie the hoops; a doll, with a smaller one on her knee was suspended in the middle, and the work was complete.

I wonder if you know or can guess why it was that these children set this mother doll and her little one in the centre of the garland as a finish to the whole?

I think it was the remains of some more ancient custom, and that formerly that doll was intended to represent the Holy Mother and her Child. *That*, as I tell you, is my belief, but *I* did it when I was a child, merely because others did it, knowing no reason why.

I wonder also if you know how sweet a task is garland-making: a task, too, in which all can help. The boys or elder girls form the hoops, and fix them one within the other, and, when the flowers are gathered and a quiet, shady corner fixed upon, you carry out your stools and chairs, the string and scissors, and all sit down to this sweetest of all garden jobs.

The eldest must make the garland, the rest gather up the flowers into pretty varied bunches ready for her to tie on to the hoops; whilst the little ones are so happy cutting up and handing bits of string, and collecting the discarded flowers for their own special use. The soft May breezes sway the branches over your head, the birds are chirping all around, on the hedge a blackbird is pouring forth that rich, sweet song we all know so well, and in the hay-field beyond, the mowers are sharpening their long scythes; the air is full of the scent of lilacs, hawthorn, and sweet-briars.

Is not the earth full of pure delights? Ah, children! When these delights are all around you, will you not remember Whose loving hand made all these things for you? made them with a fatherly thought for all the wants of your nature, and 'saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.'

But to return to this summer's afternoon of years ago,—these children started attended by a country damsel, their nurse, and followed by a little dog named Vic; Sarah, Peggie, and Johnny; some little ones remained behind, not strong enough to take so long a walk.

'Will you look back into the past with me, and shall we follow them in their walk?'

I see them as they cross the road and climb the stile into the field which rises in a steep hill to the woods. Their pace gets slower after the first eagerness of the start has been checked a little by the hot sun and up-hill walk, and they sit to rest at the first hedge-row, where two laburnums grow, and droop their golden showers over the children's heads.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

THE COTTAGE CHILDREN.

HAPPY little children,
In their cottage low,
Sheltered when the rain falls,
Or the rough winds blow.

Thinking nothing better
Than their bread and milk;
In russet garb as joyous
As in robes of silk.

Little has their mother,
But, though small her store,
She can clothe and feed them,
And she asks no more.

All day working for them,
With her love's great might;
Sleeping calmly by them
Through the silent night.

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The Cottage Children.

Dreaming not of riches,
Poor content to be,
And the future leaving
To its poverty.

Knowing, if the ravens
Certainly are fed,
They will never hunger
For their daily bread.

Summer Songs.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS BY W. WELLS GARDNER, 10 PATERNOSTER ROW.
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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. X.] OCTOBER, 1870. [One Penny.

The Frog and the Mouse.

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THE FROG AND THE MOUSE.

A FABLE FROM THE GERMAN.

'He who digs a pit for his neighbour sometimes falls into it himself.'

A MOUSE was one day sitting by a brook, and said to herself: 'I wish I could get over to the other side.'

A cunning old Frog passing that way, overheard her remark, and said: 'I will carry you across with the greatest pleasure.'

'Oh! you dear, kind Mr. Frog,' answered the innocent Mouse, 'I should be so much obliged to you.'

Then the Frog wound a stout thread round his waist, and tied the end of it to the Mouse's tail and jumped into the water, Mrs. Mouse, in great fear and trepidation, mounted on his back. All went well till they got to the middle of the stream: then the Frog all at once ducked his head into the water, and the Mouse almost slipped off his back.

'Oh! Mr. Frog,' cried she, 'do you want to drown me? That would be a shabby trick.'

'And serve you right, too,' answered the wicked Frog, 'for being such a goose as to believe I would carry you across the brook. People often make sweet promises, but they don't always mean to keep them. Another time manage for yourself.'

The unhappy little Mouse finding it was of no use to say anything, held her peace, and resigned herself to her fate. And the cruel Frog had all but dragged her under water, when a Stork flying high in the air saw the poor little thing struggling in the stream. Down he pounced, caught her up in his beak, and carried her off to his nest, the Frog hanging to her tail.

'Heyday, Mr. Frog,' said the Stork, 'what brings you here?'

'My great deceit,' answered the now trembling Frog, 'for which I shall be sorry all the rest of my life. I tried to drown the Mouse, and now I am brought to grief myself.'

'My fine fellow,' said the Stork, with a very stern voice, 'I will serve you out for your cunning and mischievous trick. You shall die!'

Then the Stork opened wide his beak, and gobbled up the deceitful Frog.

THE EVE OF THE BIRTHDAY.

(*Concluded from p.* 143.)

NOW on again across another steeper field, and now they reach a little pasture which borders on the wood.

In this sheltered spot stand two or three scattered cottages. The inmates all know our children's mother well. At one door stands a peasant-woman, whose cares and toils have been often lightened by her help; at another sits an old couple whose complaints are well known to her; all run out to ask after her as the children pass, and offer them bunches of white pinks, a rest in the cottage, or a draught of milk; whilst the children of the wood-side settlement eye them shyly, peeping through the palings or swinging on the low garden gates.

And now they enter the wood, with its tall trees and undergrowth of hazels, and its soft green carpet dotted over with clumps of primroses and blue-bells.

The little group soon scatters, one here, one there, led on by each enticing wood-path to fields of flowers, each one more abundant than the last.

Now one runs back to show a new-found flower, or to compare their nosegays, and now a soft black velvet mole is found, and the two girls solemnly bury it in a wood rut, and cover it well up with a good heap of leaves, marking the spot with care. And so the afternoon wears on, and the children, well versed in rustic sights and sounds, know, by the twittering of birds, by the lengthening shadows on the grass, and by the low glint of the sun between the trees, that it must be time to return.

But where is Johnny? who has seen him? No one has seen Johnny since his return with his first load of primroses to the basket—he must be sought for at once. Sarah and Peggie run up and down the paths seeking and calling, but no reply is heard.

Can you not imagine how at first they

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feel a little vexed with him for causing this delay; and nurse, who has been put in charge of them, blames herself for having allowed him so to wander? Then fright succeeds, and Sarah remembers she has heard of old chalk-pits in the wood so girt round with hawthorn that you cannot see the edge; and now the horrible thought arises that poor Johnny, wandering after his flowers, has fallen into a pit, and may be dead!

Wildly now they run about from side to side, calling with broken, tearful voices, 'Johnny! Johnny!' No voice replies. There is only one thing left for them to do; they must hasten home at once, shocking as the news must be, severe as the blame they merit for not having kept a better watch over the youngster, there is nothing for it but to hasten home at once.

I see them laden with the baskets filled with flowers, which now seem to mock their distress, tired, hot, and frightened, hurrying homewards down the hill-path. Sarah grave and anxious, Peggie tearful and excited, and poor nurse, distressed, and sorely perplexed to know 'what your ma will say.'

But now they come in sight of the house and garden; all is quiet, no one watching at the gate, as they half expected to see. They hasten in, eager to share the load of their anxiety, and to get help for a further search of the woods and dreadful chalk-pits; the door stands open, they cross the hall, push open the play-room door—there is Johnny! cool and calm, ignorant of having caused the least trouble; he has taken off his jacket, put on his brown holland blouse, and there he sits in the deep window-seat.

'Ah, Johnny, how could you? To go away home and never tell us! to give us such a dreadful fright!'

But all Johnny can say in excuse for himself is but little.

'Well, what was I to do? I was tired, and how was I to know where you girls were? I couldn't find you, so I just came home.'

Well, well, what more could be said? It was as well it turned out after all to be only a grand adventure to tell to the dear father and mother at tea-time; and after tea they all went out, and the garland was made to the satisfaction of every one, and carefully hung up under the trees, and sprinkled with fresh water the last thing before they went to bed to dream of the presents to be found thereon and all the pleasures of the morning.

THE DEPARTED DAUGHTER.

I HAD a little daughter,
And she was given to me
To lead me gently backward
To the heavenly Father's knee,
That I, by the force of nature,
Might in some dim wise divine
The depth of His infinite patience
To this wayward soul of mine.

I know not how others saw her,
But to me she was wholly fair,
And the light of heaven she came from
Gleamed from her eyes and her hair.
Alas! she was here scarce a twelvemonth,
And it hardly seemed a day,
When a troop of wandering angels
Stole my little daughter away.

J. R. LOWELL.

LITTLE MARY.

A MINISTER of the gospel one day speaking of faith, gave a beautiful example of it that had just occurred in his own family. He had gone into a cellar which in winter time was quite dark, and entered by a trap-door. A little daughter, only three years old, was trying to find him, and came to the trap-door; but on looking down, all was dark; and she called, 'Are you down the cellar, father?'

'Yes, would you like to come?'

'It is dark. I can't come, father.'

'Well, my child, I am right below you and I can see you though you cannot see me; if you will drop down I will catch you.'

'Oh! I should fall: I can't see you.'

'I know, child, but I am really here, and

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you shall not fall, or hurt yourself. If you will jump I will catch you safely.'

Little Mary strained her eyes to the utmost, but she could catch no glimpse of her father. She hesitated, then advanced a little farther; then summoning all her courage, she threw herself forward, and was safely caught in her father's arms.

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LITTLE CHILDREN.

SPORTING through the forest wide;
Playing by the water-side;
Wandering o'er the heathy fells;
Down within the woodland dells;
All among the mountains wild,
Dwelleth many a little child?
In the baron's hall of pride;
By the poor man's dull fireside;
'Mid the mighty, 'mid the mean,
Little children may be seen;
Like the flowers that spring up fair,
Bright, and countless, everywhere!

In the far isles of the main;
In the desert's lone domain;
In the savage mountain-glen,
'Mid the tribes of swarthy men;
Wheresoe'er a foot hath gone,
Wheresoe'er the sun hath shone,
On a league of peopled ground,
Little children may be found.

Blessings on them! they in me
Move a kind of sympathy
With their wishes, hopes, and fears;
With their laughter and their tears;
With their wonder, so intense,
And their small experience!
Little children, not alone
On the wide earth are ye known;
'Mid its labours, and its cares,
'Mid its sufferings, and its snares,
Free from sorrow, free from strife,
In the world of love and life,
Where no sinful thing hath trod,
In the presence of your God,
Spotless, blameless, glorified,
Little children, ye abide!

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LITTLE WILLIE.

A TRUE STORY.

WILLIE'S father was a shepherd, who lived quite in the fields, at a hamlet called Brook End. He had a large family, and most of his children were grown up, so that Willie, the youngest, was a great pet among them. He spent a very happy life; and often, when the weather was fine, used to be out nearly all day with his father. One sunny morning at dinner the shepherd said he was going with a cart to the pastures, to take some turnips to the sheep there, so little Willie asked if he might have a ride. His father was not willing at first, but Willie begged so hard, that he told him if he would promise to sit quietly all the way he might go as a great treat. First thing after dinner they went to feed Dadda's sheep and lambs, as he called them, for he could not understand they did not really belong to his father.

Directly they were inside the sheep-yard two of the lambs came running to them crying, 'Baa, baa,' for the poor little creatures were very hungry; they had no mother, so the shepherd took particular care of them, and used to feed them himself with nice warm milk. Willie was very fond of these two lambs, and always called them his own.

At last the horse and cart were ready, and the shepherd lifted his little boy in, and told him he must sit very quietly in the place he had made for him at one corner of the cart. Willie felt very proud when he saw his little playfellows who had no cart to ride in, and sat still for what seemed to him a long time. At first his father looked round every now and then, to see how he was getting on, but finding his little boy so quiet he walked beside the horse thinking, and at last forgot even that he was there.

By-and-bye Willie wanted to see the horse, and thought he would stand up and peep over the top of the cart: then he thought if he could get on that funny thing that went along the front of the cart, and over the horse's back, he should see much better, and perhaps his father might let him drive, as he had seen other boys do.

It was rather difficult to climb up there: but at last he had done it, and was going to call to his father to look at him when the wheel went over a stone, and Willie was thrown to the ground.

He screamed. His father called to the horse to stop, and ran to pick up his little boy. He was frightened to see him lying there so quietly, for Willie was too much hurt to cry out again, and when his father picked him up he could not stand; one leg was broken, and it hurt him dreadfully as the shepherd carried him home. He was soon taken to the infirmary, where he was put to bed, and the doctor set his leg and bound it up for him. Then, and during the long drive there, he suffered terrible pain, and often could not help crying out with it. As he lay in bed he ached all over, and though he slept a little it seemed the longest evening he had ever spent. His mother was allowed to remain that night with him, but next day she went home, and poor little Willie was left among strangers. He cried at first, but the nurse was very kind, and often came to look at him; he remembered how naughty he had been in disobeying his father, and felt very sorry for it, and he made up his mind that he would try to be a good boy now, and bear the pain as well as he could. It was a long while before he was allowed even to sit up in bed, and he felt very dull sometimes.

On certain days his friends came to see him, and he used to look forward to these visits with much pleasure. Before he left the infirmary he had learned to love his kind nurse very dearly, and felt sorry to say good-bye to her, when, after a long time, the doctor told his mother she might take him home.

He was delighted to get back to his mother, and father, and brothers, and sisters, and you can guess how pleased they were to have him at home again; his mother made a little couch for him by the window,

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so that he could see the sheep as he lay, for he was very weak and not able to run about at all.

He was sadly disappointed to see his pet lambs grown so big, and to find that now they were not fed with milk any more, but could nibble the sweet grass for themselves.

The other little boys and girls who lived at Brook End made a great fuss with him, and took all their playthings to amuse him, till he could run about and play games with them again. One doll had no head, another no arms, a wooden horse had lost its legs; but he was delighted with them: and I am sure all little boys and girls will say it was very kind of the children to give up their toys for the sake of their sick playfellow.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID HEARING OF SAUL'S DEATH.

AFTER sending David and his six hundred followers away from Aphek, the Philistines marched to the plain of Jezreel. By this time Saul had drawn up his army upon the neighbouring mountains of Gilboa, and when he saw what a vast host was coming against him *he was afraid and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not* (1 Sam. xxviii. 5, 6), because he inquired without faith or repentance. Yet, instead of humbling himself and persevering in seeking God, Saul went to consult one of the witches whom, in the earlier part of his reign, he had rightly tried to banish out of his land. He asked this witch to *Bring up Samuel*, who was dead; and God let Samuel appear, to the terror of the witch herself and of Saul.

Saul asked Samuel what he should do in his sore distress, and Samuel told him that because of his disobedience God had taken the kingdom from him and given it to David, and also that on the morrow Saul and his sons should be with the dead.

Then Saul *fell all along upon the earth, and was sore afraid.* That same night he went back to his camp and the battle took place next day. The Philistines chased the Israelites up the mountains of Gilboa, and slew hundreds of Saul's bravest men as well as his three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchi-shua. The king himself was so severely wounded and so closely pursued that, seeing no chance of escape, he ordered his armour-bearer to draw his sword and slay him in order that he might not be taken and tortured by the Philistines. As the man shrank from killing his royal master, Saul took the sword and threw himself upon it, so that he fell dead in the midst of his defeated army. *And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword and died with him*, and the surviving men of Israel fled in haste to escape from the Philistines.

Among those who wandered over the battle-field in search of spoil was a young Amalekite, who discovered the body of Saul lying on the ground; and he would know him by the crown and the armlet which the king usually wore. These he quickly took off, and then he hastened with them to Ziklag to give them to David, who, he supposed, would now be the king of Israel. Not content with carrying these proofs of Saul's death, by which to obtain David's favour, he resolved to increase his claim to reward by pretending that he himself had killed Saul. He entered Ziklag with his clothes torn and earth upon his head in token of mourning, and when he came to David he fell down before him to pay him such respect as was due to a king.

As David had heard no tidings of the battle, he was eager to know how it had fared with Saul. So on finding that the young man had escaped from the camp of Israel *David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee tell me*, and he answered, *The people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead: and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.* When David asked, *How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?* Then the man said, that happening to pass by the spot

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David hearing of Saul's Death.

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Autumn. P. 154.

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where the wounded king was, he found him vainly trying to put an end to his own life, and that when Saul knew him to be not a Philistine but an Amalekite, he said to him, *Stand upon me and slay me.* The man added, *So I stood upon him and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord* (2 Sam. i. 10, 11).

David believed this lying tale, but instead of giving him the reward which the Amalekite expected to receive, David ordered that he should immediately be put to death for having dared to stretch forth his hand to destroy the Lord's anointed. Then, forgetting that Saul had been his persecutor, David rent his clothes and wept and grieved much for his death. But greatly as he mourned for Saul, he was still more distressed at having lost his beloved friend Jonathan; and he poured forth his grief in a beautiful and tender lament for Saul and Jonathan.

This lament and the just punishment of the Amalekite who told the lying tale about Saul's death, both show that David was too noble to remember the king's injustice and ill-will, and too unselfish to rejoice at his own deliverance from persecution. Ought not such an example to put us to shame and cause us to pray for grace that our love to our enemies may become as pure and true and self-forgetting as was that of *the man after God's own heart?*

AUTUMN.

GOLDEN Autumn comes again,
With its storms of wind and rain,
With its fields of yellow grain.

Gifts for man and bird and brute,
In its wealth of luscious fruit,
In its store of precious root.

Trees bend down with plum and pear,
Rosy apples scent the air,
Nuts are ripening everywhere.

Thro' the lanes where 'bindweed' waver
Graceful wreaths of clustering leaves,
Home the reapers bear the sheaves.

Singing loud their harvest song,
In their hearty rustic tongue—
Singing gaily, old and young.

Singing loud beside the wain,
With its load of bursting grain,
Dropping all along the lane.

Mice and ant and squirrel fill
Now their garners at their will,
Only drones need hunger still.

Flocks of sparrows downward fly
From their hawthorn perch on high,
Pecking each one greedily.

Though the summer flowers are dead,
Still the poppy rears its head,
Flaunting gaily in all red.

Still the daisy, large and white,
Shining like a star at night
In the hedge-row twinkles bright.

Still the 'traveller's joy' is seen,
Snowy white, o'er leaves of green,
Glittering in its dewy sheen.

Still the fox-glove's crimson bell,
And the fern-leaves in the dell,
Autumn's parting beauty tell.

Purple sunsets, crimson leaves,
Fruit and flowers and golden sheaves,
Autumn gives us ere she leaves.

MRS. HAWTREY.

'I QUITE FORGOT.'

BESSIE CROFTON was such a good-tempered child, so unselfish and kind, that it seemed the greater pity she should be so very careless and forgetful.

Bessie would leave the merriest game of play, or the most amusing book, to carry a message or fetch anything that was wanting, or she would give up her own pleasure and amuse her baby-brother for hours on the nursery floor: and yet, if sent for two things, *one* would surely be forgotten, and even the pet-brother would be at times allowed to crawl into mischief or danger through Bessie's carelessness.

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'I am very sorry, but I quite forgot,' was the excuse, and yet it seemed as if nothing would make Bessie more thoughtful.

One Christmas, her grandmother made Bessie a present of a book full of tales and pictures, and no little girl could have been more delighted than she was.

'You should put your book on your shelf in the book-case,' said her mother, and Bessie, as usual, agreed. But she carried it first upstairs to show nurse, and then forgot all about it until next day, when she found one of the younger children had left the marks of little fingers on every page, and one of the pictures was torn across. And though Bessie made her usual excuse, 'I quite forgot,' she knew that it was her own fault that the new book was spoiled.

At length something more serious happened which was caused by this fault.

At the end of Mr. Crofton's large garden there was a little field with a pond in it, and the children were never allowed to go in this field unless some older person was with them, so the gate leading from the garden was kept locked. One day Bessie was charged with a message to nurse that the children should not go alone into the garden as the field gate was open for the gardener to cut the grass. But Bessie ran off to her lessons and forgot the message, and the nurse, as usual, sent several of the children to the garden while she was busy with the baby.

Finding the gate open, the little ones wandered into the field, and by-and-bye ventured down to the edge of the pond where they laughed to see their own chubby faces reflected. But presently there was a splash and a scream! Little Georgie had overbalanced himself, and was in the water. Happily the pond was not deep, and he was quickly rescued, but the shock had been so terrible to the little fellow, that he was carried to the house almost lifeless, and for many hours it was hardly known whether he would get well again.

No one reproached Bessie, her own thoughts were bitter enough without any words, and during those long hours of dread she prayed earnestly that God would spare her little brother, and also help her from that time to amend her faults.

At last the little boy recovered consciousness, and when he was sleeping quietly some time later Bessie was allowed to look at his little white face which was so changed from that of the rosy Georgie of a few hours before.

I cannot tell you that Bessie became thoughtful and careful all at once, but I *can* say that from that day Bessie was aroused to see the sorrow and suffering that may spring from a habit of forgetfulness and carelessness. She sincerely wished and tried to be different; and if ever she was inclined to slip back into the old way, one look at Georgie, or even the sound of his merry voice, was enough to bring to mind the day when 'I quite forgot,' might have lost that little brother's life.

THE THREE SIEVES.

'OH, mother!' cried little Blanche, 'I heard such a tale about Edith Howard. I did not think she could have been so naughty. One day——'

'My dear,' interrupted her mother, 'before you go on any further, we will see if your story will pass the three sieves.'

'What does that mean, mother?' said Blanche.

'I will explain it, dear. In the first place, is it *true?*'

'I suppose so, mother. I heard it from Miss Parry, who said a friend of Miss White's told her the story; and Miss White is a great friend of Edith's.'

'And does she show her friendship by telling tales of her? In the next place, though you cannot prove it is true, is it *kind?*'

'I did not mean to be unkind, mother; but I am afraid I was. I should not like Edith to speak of me as I have spoken of her.'

'And is it *necessary?*'

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'No, of course not, mother; there was no need for me to mention it at all.'

'Then, dear Blanche, pray that your tongue may be governed, and that you may not indulge in evil speaking and strive more and more to imitate the meekness of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

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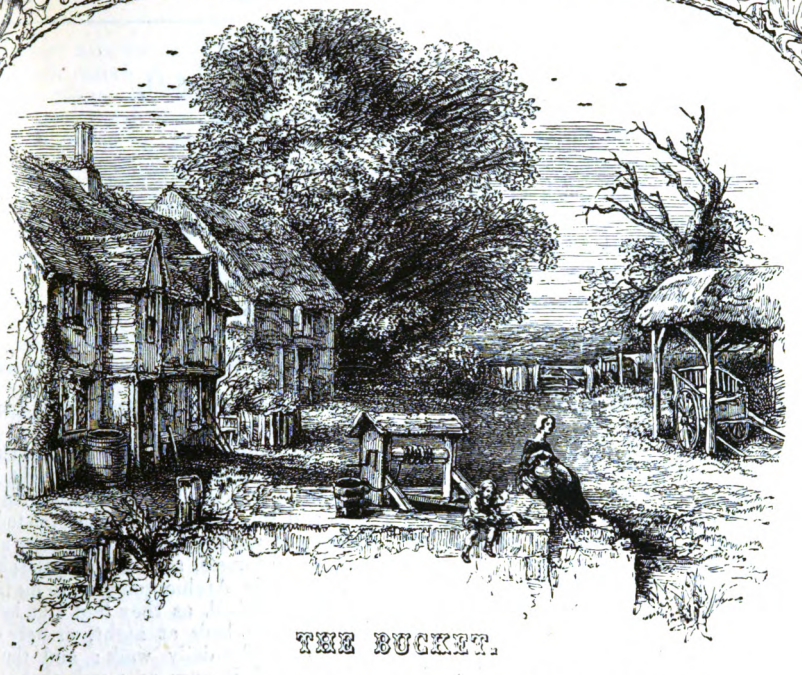

THE BUCKET.

HOW dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollections present them to view!
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wild-wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew;
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill which stood by it,
The bridge and the rock where the cataract fell,
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket which hung in the well,
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-cover'd bucket which hung in the well.

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That moss-covered vessel I hail as a treasure,
For often, at noon, when return'd from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield.
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well:
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket arose from the well.'

WORDSWORTH.

ARCHIE'S ADVENTURE.

By Mary Ashton:

ABOUT fifty miles from London, in one of the prettiest counties, there stood some years ago a large rambling old house which was used as a school for little boys—'Preparatory School for Young Gentlemen,' as it was called.

And here, under the care of a lady and her two daughters, about twenty merry little fellows made the walls of the old house ring again with their noise.

Of course school-boys *will* grumble, and out of that number there were always some who thought Mrs. Tresham 'cross,' or her daughters too strict; but I think, setting aside those foolish thoughts that children will have about those who must control them, the boys were very fond of their governess, and I am sure as they grew older and went through all the troubles of life, they would look back to their stay at 'Tresham House,' as a very happy time.

But I must tell you of one of these boys, and an adventure he had which proved a sad disappointment, and might have ended in serious trouble.

Archie Durham was one of the brightest, merriest boys in Mrs. Tresham's school; he was reckoned one of the big boys there, for he was nearly ten years old, and he was always first in every bit of fun or game of play that went forward.

I call my tale 'Archie's Adventure,' because he planned it, and thought how delightful it would be to be free from lessons and school restraint, not even to have father and mother to obey, but to live in the woods and forests, something as the gipsies do. All this Archie confided to his friend Bertie Campbell, as they laid side by side in their little beds at night, or were companions in the daily walk; and the two boys talked it over so much that at last they seriously thought how they could best escape from school and try this life for themselves. They pictured themselves sleeping under bushes on the green turf, having acorns and berries for their food, and at times catching a hare or rabbit, or shooting a bird—something after the manner of the ancient Britons they read about in their English History.

Archie enjoined upon Bertie the wisdom of saving up any pence he might have, as they might require funds on their journey to the wood they had chosen, which was some miles away from Tresham House.

At the end of three weeks they compared their savings, and one of them produced threepence halfpenny, the other had a sixpence, three halfpence, and an odd farthing. Just at that time Bertie Campbell had a hamper from home containing cake, gingerbread, and other good things, so the boys decided it was a very good opportunity to set off. But how to get away, that was the question.

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The boys were too well looked after to have much chance of getting away from the house unseen. At last a bright thought struck Archie, and that was, that when they were all out in the fields one Wednesday half-holiday it would be very easy to slip off without being noticed.

So Wednesday came. Bertie's face was pale that morning as he took his seat at the long breakfast-table. He was nearly two years younger than Archie, and now the time for flight had come his courage nearly failed him, only he was afraid to draw back for fear of Archie's laughter. The morning seemed as if it never would pass, and neither of the boys could give their mind to their lessons at all. Dinner-time came; excitement had taken away their healthy school-boy appetites, and they scarcely ate anything. At last it was time to start for the field where they played on fine half-holidays.

Archie had filled his cap with big slices of Bertie's cake, both boys had their pockets crammed with gingerbread, and Bertie had also a piece of bread and cheese saved from his supper of the previous night.

What a pleasant summer day that was! Not too hot, but very bright and sunny, and just breeze enough to make the walk pleasant. When they got to the field the boys started various games or sauntered off in pairs to talk, whilst Miss Tresham, who was in charge of them, seated herself on the grass under a tree reading a book, and glancing now and then at her pupils to see that all was well.

So no one noticed Archie and Bertie as they stole away and clambered over the stile into the next field (which was strictly forbidden), and then ran as fast as feet could go across several fields and out into a narrow country lane which led to Hurst Wood, whither they were bound. It was pleasant enough at first, the sun was so bright, and it glanced and quivered so prettily through the green leaves of the trees which shaded the lane. The sky was very clear, the birds sang loudly, and the boys' hearts were as light as if they were not doing a very wrong thing.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

THE WHITE JACKET.

I KNOW a little girl with blue eyes and golden curls, who had a new white jacket bought for her. The first time she wore it, the ground was covered and heaped with fresh snow. The snow was no whiter than the new jacket, and as she ran along to Sunday-school she looked like a white lamb, or a big snowball turned into a little girl. Pretty soon her mother, in folding the jacket away, found a soiled place on the sleeve. 'That's where I leaned against a boy who stood next to me in the class,' said little Blue-eyes. Another day, another spot. 'That's where I sat down on a dirty step to tie my shoe,' again pleaded Blue-eyes. So from week to week mother found spots here and there, until the little girl in the white jacket began to look brown as an old sheep.

One day, as mother was telling the story of the white jacket to a friend, she was comforted by her saying, 'After a while you won't notice the soiled places; another winter, it will all look alike.'

The white jacket took a long journey on the dusty road in the country; and, sure enough, there were then no soiled spots to be found on it. It was a sort of French grey; and when she ran through the snow to Sunday-school, no one would have known that it was the spotless, snow-white garment of a year ago.

Now, my dear young reader, what lessons do you think I learn from this little white jacket? It reminds me of your *conscience.* At first, it is all tender and clean. You begin to do wrong, to say bad words, to speak untruths; and as your mother asks where the ugly spots come from, you can say you learned to sin of Jim Jones, or heard bad words at the school-playground, or in the street. Your mother talks with you and prays with you, just as she rubbed and brushed the white jacket, when it began to be soiled. By-and-bye some one tells her, 'Boys will be boys. Let him alone; he'll sow his wild oats.' So she gives you up, perhaps, just as she did the jacket, till you do so many naughty, sly, wicked things, that you begin to be called a *wild boy.* Your mother often wishes she

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had the tender little son again who grieved and confessed when he had done wrong. Now your conscience is all defiled and begrimed, like the white jacket, so that you can say bad words, disobey, and be wrong in many ways, and make no new soiled spots on your conscience.

The jacket is of no account. It was made to perish with the using. My little boy, your soiled conscience must be purified or you can never join the happy ones in heaven, who have 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

M. E. W.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XI.] NOVEMBER, 1870. [One Penny.

Grandmother at the Window.

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TALKING IN THEIR SLEEP.

'JIBBER jabber, jibber jabber, jabber jibber,' said the children.

'What, my dears?' said the grandmother, starting up in bed.

Dear grandmother, when people talk in their sleep they don't require any answer.

'Jibber jabber, jibber jabber,' said the children.

'What, my dears?' said the grandmother again. 'Oh, do try and speak distinctly, I can't make out what you say.'

Before she had done talking the children burst out again,

'Jibber jabber, jibber jabber, jibber jabber, jibber jabber.'

'Got a ladder, got a ladder,' cried the grandmother, while the big frills on her nightcap shook with fright. 'Oh, my dears, what can you mean? Where is the ladder?'

'Gibbee Barbee doll, gibbee Barbee doll,' said the baby, roused up by the noise!

'By the garden wall! Oh, my dears, this is terrible;' and the poor grandmother stumbled out of bed. 'Just the night when your poor father has got all that money in the house for the parish clubs; the rogues must have heard of it. Oh dear! oh dear!'

She went to the window and looked out; it was a bright autumn night, and in the clear moonlight even her poor, dim, frightened eyes could distinctly make out that there *was* a ladder, placed against the garden wall, just under the big apple-tree, and on the wall itself a dark object, which was plainly a man in the very act of coming down it.

'Oh, dear!' cried the grandmother, as she gasped with terror, and clutched at the curtains with her old shaking hands.

'I must put on a few things and go and rouse your poor father, my dears,' she said, when breath enough to speak came back.

The children did not answer; indeed, they had all along been fast asleep, only the grandmother did not know it.

'I won't light a candle lest the villains should come up here and murder you in your beds, but I wish I knew what the time is.'

Just then the big church clock struck two; the grandmother shivered again with terror.

'Just as if it heard me, my dears,' she said. Which indeed it did not, any more than did the children.

She had put on a long black petticoat, but, owing to her frightened starts, it had three times slipped off and been shuffled on again. At last she got it fastened; then she pinned a little shawl over her head, cap and all, put another shawl loosely over her shoulder, and slipped her shaking feet into a pair of slippers; of course, she put her toes where her heels ought to have gone, at first, but after a little shuffling she managed to get them right. Then she went to look at the children.

'If the little lambs have not gone off to sleep again,' she cried, in a voice loud enough to have awakened them, and then she stumbled downstairs.

She stood outside the father's door, and chattered with raised voice and lifted hands.

'Oh, come out, come out!' she cried; 'thieves, robbers, and murderers! and the dear children woke me and told me. Come out, come out! To think of it with all the club money in the house; the villains must have heard of it. Come out, come out!'

The Rector started up in bed at the first cry, and answered time after time, but the grandmother was talking too loud to hear anything but her own voice; at last he quite shouted in answer, but the grandmother was shouting too, and besides, the shawl was tightly pinned over her ears.

At last the father in his dressing-gown opened the door, his wife close behind him.

'Where are the robbers?' he asked, speaking loud, so that she might hear.

'In the garden,' shouted the grandmother, speaking louder.

Just then the black petticoat got loose again, and happily for the Rector it took her some moments to fasten, so that he had time to light a candle and get out his pistols before she came. He took one loaded with a harmless cap, and flung open the window; there, sure enough, was the ladder, but two figures were now visible, one at the foot, one on the top of it.

'Who's there?' shouted the Rector, 'answer, or I fire.'

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But by this time the grandmother was at liberty again.

'Oh, have mercy! have mercy!' she bawled, seizing hold of the Rector's arm with one hand, whilst with the other she clutched her petticoat; 'let there be no bloodshed. 'My dear'—turning to the silent mother—'will you not prevent your husband's committing murder?'

Meanwhile either the 'villains' had made no answer, or it had been drowned by the grandmother's voice, so the Rector fired. Instantly the two figures made off; the one at the top of the ladder dropping into the lane as though he really had been shot, and the other clambering after him as fast as was possible.

The grandmother shrieked. 'Is anybody killed?' she cried, letting go her petticoat to cling to the Rector with both hands. 'Oh, my dear, you'd better tell me; I'll help you all I can, but it was a wicked thing to do;' and she began to cry.

'Dear Granny,' said the mother, 'no one has been hurt, it was only a cap.'

'Only your cap,' cried the grandmother, indignation drying her tears, 'only her cap! Do you hear that, sir?' and she took advantage of her position to give the nearly exhausted Rector a good shaking. 'You have nearly murdered your wife this night, sir! For shame!'

The poor man looked at the nearly murdered woman as though begging her to release him. 'Explain it to her,' he said, quite hoarse with shouting.

The mother stroked the dear old hands which would have done anything for her, and said, 'Dear Granny, he put a cap on the pistol, that was all, and no one is hurt in the least. But you must be so tired with this fright, we must see to you now those men have gone.'

'I am tired,' said the grandmother in an aggrieved tone, 'I have exerted myself greatly, and talking always exhausts me. And to think,' she went on, raising her voice, 'that if it had not been for those dear children we might all have been murdered in our beds.'

'But how did they find out about it?' said the Rector.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

MARY'S ROSEBUSH.

MARY BROWN was just ten years old. She was a cheerful, light-hearted, pleasant-tempered child, which every line of her sweet face showed so plainly, that she made friends wherever she went. Mary had lived with her aunt from the time she was three years old, having at that time been deprived by death of both parents. She proved herself so gentle and affectionate, that her aunt had never had occasion to regret the warm welcome to her own home and heart that she had given to the homeless little orphan.

Mary's 'lines' had indeed 'fallen in pleasant places.' They lived in a pretty cottage, surrounded by fine old trees, among whose leafy branches the birds built their nests, and made the air resound with their little songs of praise to their Creator. Climbing-roses and honeysuckles covered the piazza in front of the house; while the green lawn, dotted with flower-beds, completed the pleasant picture. Mary dearly loved flowers, and she might be often seen flitting from one to another, admiring their bright colours and enjoying their sweet scent.

But there was one rosebush which she especially prized, for it was *her own*. It was a choice kind which her aunt had given her. As yet it had not bloomed; and Mary tended it carefully, keeping the earth loose about its roots, and frequently sprinkling its leaves, to keep them from dust and hurtful insects. What could the little plant do in gratitude for such loving care but to grow quickly, and send out new shoots in every direction. And one morning when Mary went to visit it, what was her delight to discover three tiny buds just peeping from among its glossy foliage. Her aunt shared in the pleasure of her niece; and when Mary had exhausted her expressions of admiration, she said,—

'You, my dear child, are to others what this little plant is to you—an object of

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Mary's Rosebush.

watchful care and of tender anxiety; and as that needs the warmth of the sun's rays and the refreshing dews to give it strength and beauty, so do you need that the beams from the Sun of Righteousness should shine into your heart, and that the dews of Christ's grace should descend upon it, that it may bring forth the buds and sweet-scented blossoms of true piety. And as the pretty bush does not live its sweet life for itself alone, but that it may make others happy and do them good; so may you be enabled to live a useful, unselfish life, for that is the only one that is pleasing to God.'

Mary did not forget her aunt's gentle lesson, of which she was reminded whenever she visited her rosebush, to which each day added new beauty. As she grew older, she strove still more to live for others, so that some might be at least *a little* better and happier for her existence.

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BE KIND TO THE BIRDS.

A LITTLE girl, seeing the servant throw the crumbs into the fire, reproved her by saying, 'Don't you know that God takes care of the sparrows?'

'If God takes care of them,' was the careless reply, 'we need not trouble ourselves about them.'

'But,' said the little girl, 'I had rather be like God, and help Him to take care of the little birds, than scatter or waste the food that He gives us.'

So she carefully collected from the hearth the crumbs that were not already destroyed by the fire, and threw them out of the window. In a short time she was rewarded for her care, by seeing several little birds fly eagerly to the spot, and pick up the crumbs she had scattered. After this she every day collected in a little basket the crumbs and bits of bread that had fallen around the table, and threw them out under the window for the little birds; and during all the winter these

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little creatures came regularly to partake of the food thus provided for them.

How beautiful it was to see this little girl trying 'to help God,' as she said, and thus early learning to be kind to the helpless and the needy of God's creatures. God has made the little birds, in part no doubt, for our enjoyment. Their merry songs often gladden our hearts, and we love to watch their joyful movements, as they flit from bough to bough, and build their nests in the leafy branches; and we should be kind and generous towards them, remembering that 'the merciful man regardeth the life of his beast,' or of that which is most helpless and needy. F. R. F.

WHISKERS FOR GIRLS.

CLEOPATRA was a little girl who had a great habit of commanding all the family, and lecturing her brother whenever he did not obey all her directions.

Her parents tried to cure her of this, and her mother gave her much good advice, which she would not lay to heart; and her poor little brother led a weary life.

One day it happened that a gentleman dined at their house. He could not help seeing with what a haughty air Cleopatra treated her poor brother, and, indeed, every other person in the room. At first, the rules of politeness kept him from saying anything; but at last, tired out with her impertinence, he said to her mother,—

'I was lately in France, and as I was fond of being present at the soldiers' exercises, I used to go as often as I could to see their movements on the parade. Among the soldiers there were many I observed with whiskers, which gave them a very fierce and soldier-like look. Now if I had a child like your Cleopatra, I would instantly give her a soldier's uniform and put a pair of whiskers on her, when she might, with rather more propriety than at present, act the part of a commander.'

Cleopatra heard this, and could not help blushing, and was unable to conceal her tears. However, this reproof cured her of her domineering ways, and she made up her mind to behave so as not to need a soldier's uniform nor a pair of whiskers.

Are there any of our little readers that order and command others? If so, we think they will be obeyed much sooner by saying '*Please*,' than by giving harsh commands or wearing fierce-looking whiskers. H.

DAVID AT THE GRAVE OF ABNER.

AFTER Saul's death, David, with his friends and his followers, went at God's command to Hebron. In that ancient city he was anointed king by the men of Judah; but through the clever management of Abner, Saul's cousin and general, all the other tribes chose for their king Ish-bosheth, the only one of Saul's sons who was not killed in the battle of Mount Gilboa. This caused a civil war (that is, a war between men of the same country), in which David's army was commanded by Joab, and Ish-bosheth's by Abner. The two armies met at the Pool of Gibeon; and as neither Joab's men nor Abner's were willing to begin the attack upon their fellow-countrymen, Abner proposed that twelve picked men of Judah should fight the battle out with twelve of the men of Benjamin: and to this Joab agreed.

It would seem that this was at first meant only for a trial of skill between the warriors, but the combat soon became a real one; and so fierce was the struggle, that not one of the twenty-four escaped alive.

This drawn battle was followed by a general attack, in which David's men were victorious, because God was on their side. *And there was a very sore battle that day* (2 Sam. ii. 17), so that Abner and his defeated army fled away in haste.

During the flight, Abner found himself pursued by Asahel, Joab's young brother, who was as swift-footed as a wild roe, or gazelle; and who thought, that to take Abner prisoner or to slay him would be a sure way of putting an end to the war. Abner, knowing himself to be a far stronger man than Asahel, twice begged the young

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man to cease from pursuing him: *but Asahel would not turn aside from following of him*, and at last, in self-defence, Abner smote him with the hinder end of his spear; *and he fell down there and died in the same place. And it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still;* for, even in the excitement of the battle-field, deep sorrow fell upon all for the loss of David's brave young nephew. The rest of the slain were buried on the field of battle, but Asahel was carried to Bethlehem and laid to rest in the sepulchre of his father.

In the course of time Ish-bosheth was so ungrateful as to quarrel with his supporter, Abner, and the old general told him that he should try to win over the tribes to David's side, so as *to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba.* (2 Sam. iii. 10.) In order that this might be brought to pass, Abner went to Hebron with a guard of only twenty men, and told David that he hoped soon to join all Israel into one kingdom under his government. As this would put an end to the civil war, it was joyful news to David. He gave Abner and his men a hearty welcome, and invited them to a feast; after which they departed, in order that Abner might carry out his plans. *I will arise and go*, said he, *and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.*

Almost as soon as Abner left the city by one road, Joab and a party of David's servants returned to it by another road; and when the people told Joab that Abner had paid David a visit, and had been kindly received by him, he was so jealous and angry that he hastened to the king, and tried to persuade him that Abner had only come as a spy, and would certainly deceive him instead of keeping his promise.

But David trusted Abner, and Joab, finding that no words of his could alter the king's opinion, determined that he would himself put his rival to death; and he therefore sent messengers to overtake Abner, and bid him return at once to Hebron.

Abner suspected no harm and returned to Hebron, where he found Asahel's two brothers, Joab and Abishai, waiting for him at the gate of the city. Joab came forward and took him aside, as if he had something of great importance to tell him; but instead of speaking he smote him suddenly with a sword and killed him, partly in revenge for Asahel's death and partly from envy.

The news of this treacherous deed filled David with sorrow and anger; but thoughts of God's presence were mingled with his grief, and therefore his first words were a declaration that he and his people were free in God's sight from the sin of the murder. *When David heard it he said, I and my people are guiltless before the Lord for ever from the blood of Abner.* (2 Sam. iii. 28.) Then, after foretelling what dreadful judgments from God should fall upon the murderer, he ordered that there should be a general mourning for Abner, and that Joab should take part in the funeral ceremonies. *And King David himself followed the bier: and they buried Abner in Hebron. And the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept.* Then David composed and sang a lament as he stood at the grave, saying,—

'Died Abner as a fool (an evil-doer) *dieth?*
Thy hands were not bound,
Nor thy feet put into fetters:
As a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou.'

David did not venture to punish so powerful a man as Joab was, but he assured his servants that the Lord would *reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.*

Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long, said Solomon (Prov. xxiii. 17). Have we, like David, this holy *fear of the Lord?* If so, when any evil or mischief has happened, and we are blamed for it, our first thought will be, not about what our companions are thinking of us, but whether or not God sees that we are clear of all share in the sin of which we are suspected. If, like David, we are innocent, let us at once thank Him Who has kept us so. If we are guilty, let us ask His pardon, and honestly confess what we have done, and patiently bear whatever punishment or trouble we may have to endure.

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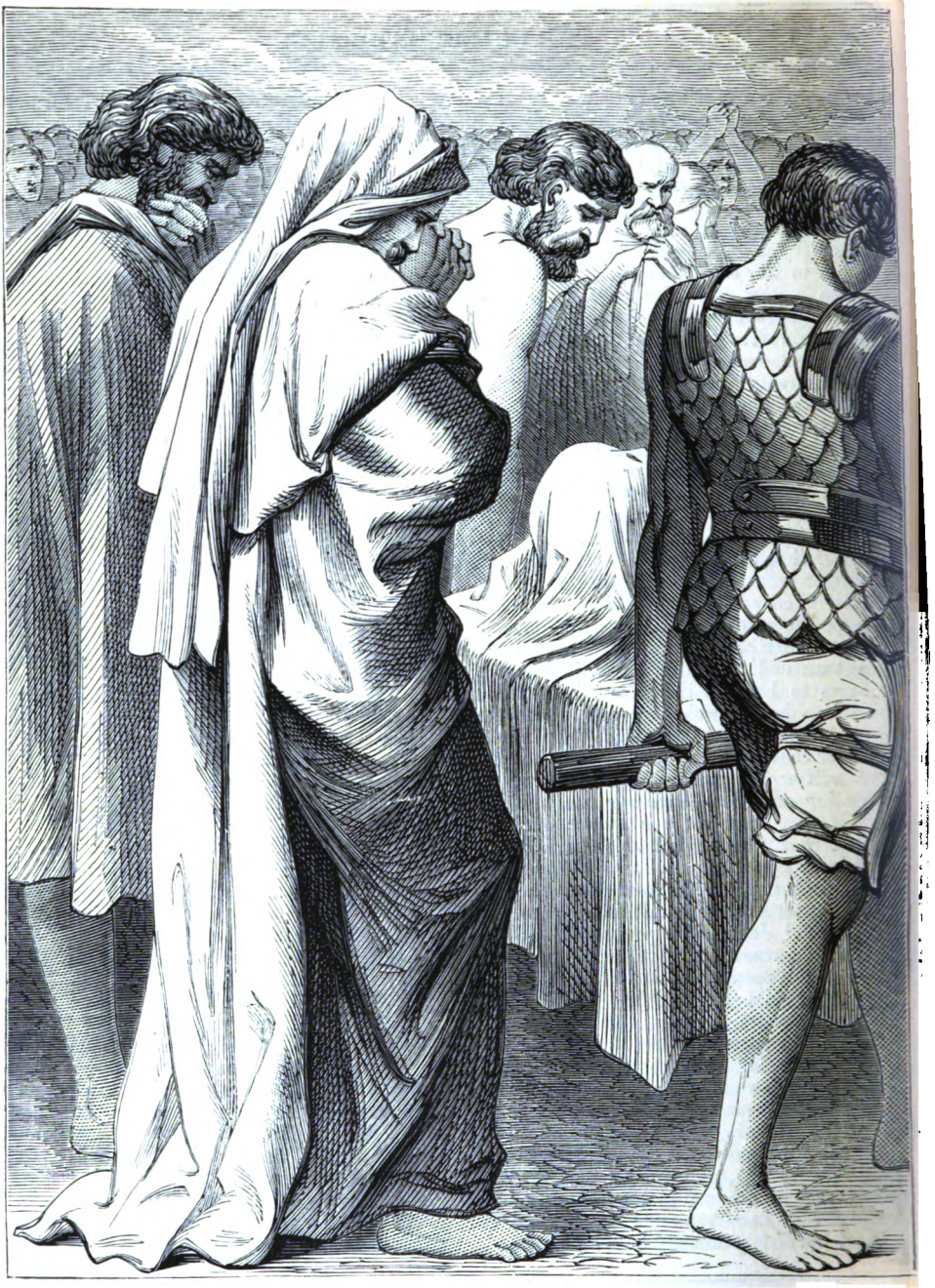

David following the bier of Abner.

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A Little Goosey

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A LITTLE GOOSEY.

THE chill November day was done,
The working world home faring;
The wind came roaring through the streets
And set the gas-lights flaring;
And hopelessly and aimlessly
The seared old leaves were flying;
When mingled with the soughing wind
I heard a small voice crying.

And shivering at the corner stood
A child of four or over;
No cloak nor hat her small soft arms,
And wind-blown curls to cover.
Her dimpled face was stained with tears;
Her round blue eyes ran over!
She cherished in her wee, cold hand
A bunch of faded clover;

And one hand round her treasure, while
She slipped in mine the other;
Half scared, half confidential, said,
'Oh, please, I want my mother.'
'Tell me your street and number, pet,
Don't cry, I'll take you to it.'
Sobbing she answered, 'I forget;
The organ made me do it.

'He came and played at Miller's steps,
The monkey took the money;
And so I followed down the street,
That monkey was *so* funny.
I've walked about a *hundred hours*
From one street to another;
The monkey's gone, I've spoiled my flowers:
Oh, please, I want my mother.'

'But what's your mother's name, and what
The street?—now think a minute.'
'My mother's name is 'mamma dear'—
The street—I can't begin it.'
'But what is strange about the house,
Or new, not like the others?'
'I guess you mean my trundle-bed,—
Mine, and my little brother's.

'O dear! I ought to be at home
To help him say his prayers,
He's such a baby, he forgets,
And we are both such players—
And there's a bar between to keep
From pitching on each other,
For Harry rolls when he's asleep;
O dear! I want my mother.'

The sky grew stormy; people passed,
All muffled homeward faring;
'You'll have to spend the night with me,'
I said at last, despairing.
I tied her kerchief round her neck—
'What ribbon's this, my blossom?'
'Why! don't you know?' she smiling asked,
And drew it from her bosom.

A card, with number, street, and name;
My eyes astonished met it;
'For,' said the little one, 'you see
I might sometimes forget it;
And so I wear a little thing
That tells you all about it;
For mother says she's very sure
I would get lost without it.'

THE WHITE ROSEBUDS.

IN one of the beds of a beautiful garden grew a single rosebush. Its blossoms were spotless white, but as yet only two tiny buds graced its branches, and they hung almost close together. Now it happened that as Flora (who, you know, is the queen of all flowers) passed round to see her subjects, she heard these two white buds holding a conversation.

'Oh!' said the first, 'how wearisome it is to hang here all the day in the hot sunshine, and how horrid to bear the cold night dews, and sometimes a drenching shower! I wish that some kind hand would release me from this cruel bondage!'

Then answered the other, 'And where, sister, would you choose to be taken?'

'Surely I would wish to see all the gaiety there is in the world; to deck some fair beauty, and feel myself envied and admired. Would not you wish the same?'

Gently spoke the other, as she said,—

'Perhaps, sister, I am not so wise as you; but I would choose a place where I might give pleasure, and not win all for myself.'

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I saw then that Flora smiled upon the sisters, and, as she touched them with her wand, she decreed that each should have her wish. And ere many minutes had gone by, there came that way the lady of the house, with a young maiden by her side.

'Alice,' said the elder, 'cannot you find a few flowers to wear at the party this evening?'

'Oh, mother, I have arranged all that; but see these two lovely buds! I must have one of these as well.' So saying, she severed from the branch the bud that wished for gaiety.

And when eventide came the rose was put in a conspicuous place, in the dark hair of the maiden Alice. Very pretty did it look in its snowy whiteness, and many were the praises it won for itself and its beautiful mistress; and it began to laugh at the foolishness of its timid sister, whom it had left so lonely on the branch. But, presently, the heat became oppressive, it grew sickly and faint, and I heard it sigh forth mournfully, 'Oh, for one drop of the cooling night-dew!' But none could descend to its relief; when gay guests had gone, and Alice went to her room, the withered flowers were taken from her head and cast aside without a thought of the beauty they had once possessed. Next day as the sun shone in at the window I heard the rosebud's plaintive voice, saying,—

'Alas, alas! I am dying, and no one cares to save me. Oh, that I had been content with my gentle sister, or that, like her, I had wished to live only to please others, that now they might care for me!'

Then, as I turned away, I thought, 'I will now see how it fares with the other tiny bud.' But as I was going to find the spot where it grew, I met another young lady of the house bearing it in her hand. A little girl walked beside her, who asked, with childish curiosity,—

'Laura, why have you gathered that pretty rose, and what do you mean to do with it?'

'It is for Mary Neal, my dear, and I hope this will please her.'

The child looked up wonderingly, as she said, half to herself, 'Do such worthless things please poor people? I thought they only wanted money, and warm things for the winter.' Then Laura passed on to the cottage of the sick girl, and as she entered a voice exclaimed,—

'Miss Laura, I am so glad you are come to see me! I have been lying, fancying to myself over again all the kind things you have done for me, and I did so hope you would come to let me thank you before I died.'

And the young lady sat down in that poor home, and spoke kind and cheering words to the sick girl, and ere she left she put the rosebud she had brought in water with her own hand, and set it by the bedside. And the little flower had its choice, for it gave pleasure to the dying girl; and as she turned wearily from side to side, and her cheek grew more pale with the pain she bore, she would often gaze on that flower, dreamily repeating:—'How kind of her to bring me that sweet flower, and how beautifully she talked of its pure whiteness, reminding me of the robes I soon shall wear! Then, too, it makes me think of the Rose of Sharon, and keeps away many a murmur, by bringing to mind the pains He bore.'

The rosebud heard all that was said, and whispered to itself, 'I am so happy; my wish has been fulfilled, and I am giving pleasure!'

Then the shades of night spread again over the earth, and the Angel of Death came down and hovered over the home of Mary the cottage-girl. But ere her breath was quite gone, she spoke again of the 'white robes' and the 'Rose of Sharon,' and, pointing to the tiny bud, gasped faintly, 'Bury my flower with me!'

And so the rose that wished to give pleasure was laid on her breast in the coffin.

And now, children, which will you choose to follow? One bud asked for gaiety and admiration, but found they were no friends in the hour of decay; the other asked that it might bestow happiness, and found that this was paid back richly into its own bosom.

And do not think lightly of the example of the gentle Laura. Kind words and sympathising deeds are more to the poor than costly gifts carelessly given; and re-

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'The rose was put in Alice's hair.' P. 171.

member, that your reward will be from Him who said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' M. P.

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SUNBEAM LOVE.

A DARLING little infant
Was playing on the floor,
When suddenly a sunbeam
Came through the open door;
And striking on the carpet,
It made a little dot;
The darling baby saw it,
And crept up to the spot.

His little face was beaming
With a world of perfect joy,
As if an angel's presence
Had filled the little boy:
And with his tiny finger,
As in a fairy dream,
He touched the dot of sunshine,
And followed up the beam.

He looked up to his mother,
To share his infant bliss;
Then stooped and gave the sunbeam
A pure, sweet baby kiss.
O Lord, our Heavenly Father,
In the fulness of my joy,
I pray that childlike feeling
May never leave the boy.

But in the days of trial,
When sin allures the youth,
Send out the light to guide him,
The sunbeams of Thy truth.
And may his heart be ever
To Thee an open door,
Through which Thy truth, as sunbeams,
Make joy upon life's floor.

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THE FIELDFARE.

A FABLE ABOUT OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

'NOW, child, are you coming?' said a mother Fieldfare to her son, one bright morning in October. But the young bird seemed loth to quit the maple-tree, in dear old Norway, where he had first seen the light.

'You shall return in better times,' said the mother; 'be sure of that. But for the present you must leave, or you will soon have nothing to eat. Moreover, the cold weather will be upon us presently; I begin to feel the air very biting already.' And with these words the young fieldfare allowed himself at last to be persuaded.

Away, then, to merry England! Away with the rest over the ocean! Instead of the pines and maple-trees of Norway, or the juniper groves of Sweden, they see nothing below them for miles and miles but the salt sea; until our young friend begins to feel both tired and hungry. 'So much the better,' said his mother, when he complained; 'you will know how to relish your food when you get it; and there is plenty where we are going. Cheer up! we are nearly there.' And on they swept, until they were safe on the coast of Lincolnshire.

What a supper did the travellers make the first night! Several hedges were stripped of their scarlet berries in a few minutes; and it went ill with all the insects in the neighbouring fens and meadows. So the weeks rolled on; our fieldfare living like a prince, and dear old Norway quite forgotten.

One morning, however, his mother's voice was heard again. 'Now, child, we must move on a little further. Do you not see that our friends are assembling for the purpose?'

'What, another flight over the sea, mother! No, I thank you,' said the young fieldfare.

'But if you remain behind you will be starved.'

'Starved!' said the foolish bird: 'I see no signs of it at present. Never had I a better breakfast than this morning. It is true the haws are beginning to disappear from the hedges; but there is always something to be had in the marshy ground.' And this time he was not to be persuaded. In vain did his mother threaten and entreat by turns.

'I will follow you,' said he, 'when I see that it is needful. At present I have enough and to spare.'

Sighing heavily, therefore, at the thought of her son's obstinacy, the poor mother left him to his fate; and turning her head southward, joined her companions, who were already beginning to darken the air with their flight.

In a week's time the frost came, and not an insect was to be had. 'I had better have gone with my mother,' said this foolish Fieldfare, who now began to feel faint and hungry; and he asked some friends of his, who had remained with him, as foolish as himself, what was to be done. It was resolved to set off for the South the first thing next morning. But before morning there came on a snow-storm, and our poor friend was lost in the driving snow.

A Home Book for Children.

ARCHIE'S ADVENTURE.

(*Concluded from p.* 159.)

THEY passed the time by eating up the cake, and took a draught of water from a spring they had the good fortune to meet with, and so they trudged on until the sun began to decline, and the long summer day was nearly over. They were just entering Hurst Wood then, and there was a solemn rustle in the trees, and a purple shadow of twilight over everything, that made Bertie shiver as he glanced nervously from side to side.

Meantime the boys in the field played on till the hour for tea, and then, as they gathered together, Archie and Bertie were missed and loudly called for.

They shouted again and again, but no sound came back, and a part of them went back to the school to inform Mrs. Tresham of their schoolfellows' disappearance, whilst the others, with Miss Tresham, began to search in every direction. At last they

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heard at a little cottage about half a mile away, that two boys answering to the description given had been seen to pass there early in the afternoon.

Poor Mrs. Tresham kept anxious watch all night, but the morning came and the wanderers were not found.

But how did it fare with the naughty little runaways? As night came creeping up grey and chilly, Archie and Bertie toiled on under the shadow of the huge forest trees —all the cake was gone and most of their courage. Bertie was almost crying, starting at every shadow which fell on the grass, and very weary and foot-sore. Archie, too, was quite tired, and felt vexed with himself for getting into such a scrape. It sounded very well to lie down on the grass and sleep till the birds' song woke them in early morning, but now Archie felt that the *reality* would be far from pleasant; and the rustling of the wind was so melancholy, and the wood so dusky and dull, that even brave Archie was timid.

After a time they heard the sound of voices. I think both boys privately hoped some one had come to find them, and they trudged on more cheerily until they came out into an open glade and found themselves in the very midst of a gipsy-encampment. There was the fire, the kettle hanging from three crossed sticks over the fire, the group of dark-faced men, and women, and children, sitting round the blazing light, whilst one or two big dogs stood looking on.

A week before, and Archie's eyes would have sparkled at the thought of beholding such a thing himself; *now* the little boys trembled as a rough-voiced man called them near.

Well, I have no wonderful tale to tell of how the boys were kept by the gipsies, how their clothes were taken from them, their faces stained, and so forth. Nothing of the sort. These gipsies heard their tale bit by bit as the boys found courage to tell it, and then they invited the hungry children to share their supper, after which a good-natured gipsy woman rolled them up in some warm coverings, and bidding them go to sleep, promised to show them their way home in the morning.

How strange it was!—like a book, as Archie said afterwards—lying there under the light of the stars, a gipsy-fire burning near, and the strange people all round them. Yet the boys were so wearied that they quickly fell asleep, and did not wake until the sun was shining brightly again.

The gipsy-woman washed their faces at a little running stream, gave them thick slices of bread and a draught of milk, and then she guided them through the wood, and showed them plainly their way towards home. It was kindly done, perhaps for the memory of a little olive-skinned boy whose active limbs had been stilled by death not long before.

How different was the going out to the setting forth on their way back! No running and talking now; the boys walked steadily and quietly on; fear of punishment, combined with other feelings, kept them serious.

About a mile from Tresham House one of the servants met them (for the search had been kept up), and taking them back ushered them into Mrs. Tresham's room.

Quickly the news spread,—'They are found!' 'They are here!' And there was a great buzz and chattering among the boys of Tresham House.

And how were they punished? you ask.

Well, in the way most painful to any right-feeling boy. They were treated as having been false to all school-boy honour, unworthy of confidence, and they were not allowed out of a teacher's sight until a long time had passed in which they could recover their lost character. They were not permitted to have a chance in the school rewards for the remainder of the year. And yet I really think both Archie and Bertie were as much grieved at the sad, anxious face of their kind governess as she met them on their return, showing the signs of what she had suffered during the night, as by any penalty that could be inflicted.

So ended Archie's adventure. I need hardly say it was the first and last of the kind he ever attempted, and it taught him and his younger companion, that though school must have its rules and customs, which are not always pleasant to children, it was, after all, a better and a happier life than complete freedom in Hurst Wood.

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Archie's Adventures.

'CHATTERBOX' Volume for 1870 is now ready, price 3s. and 5s.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XII.] DECEMBER, 1870. [One Penny.

The Little Harper.

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THE LITTLE HARPER.

By Mary B. Sleight.

THE Christmas bells chimed far and wide,
The Christmas sights were fair to see,
But with his harp against his heart,
The little harper sat apart,
And dreamed of sunny Italy.

'A song!' the merry children cried,
And tossed their pennies at his feet.
In answer to the gay command,
He struck the harp with gentle hand,
And sang a Christmas carol sweet—

The sacred story sung of old,
Of Him Who slept on Mary's knee—
And while the soft notes cleft the air,
With upraised eyes he breathed a prayer:
'Oh, blessed Christ-child, come to me.'

So sad the little harper's song,
The children half forgot their glee—
Yet still he sang the silvery strain,
Repeating oft the sweet refrain:
'Oh, blessed Christ-child, come to me.'

The Christmas sun went down the West,
The light grew dim on spire and dome—
'Good-night! good-night!' the children cried—
With out-stretched arms the harper sighed;
'Oh, blessed Christ-child, take me home.'

The Christmas stars were in the sky,
The crowd went by with quicker tread—
The child sat with his hands at rest,
And head bent low upon his breast—
'The little harper sleeps,' they said.

But while he slept the stars grew pale,
The mists of earth were backward rolled:
He heard the angel-harpers' hymn,
He saw the Christ-child stoop to him,
And waked to hold a harp of gold.

The Sunday School Scholar.

A HEAVY SNOW-STORM.

IN 1614 occurred the longest snow-storm ever known in Great Britain. It is recorded in the register of the parish of Wotton Gilbert, that it began on the 5th of January, and continued to snow at intervals of every day till the 12th of March. An immense number of human beings and cattle lost their lives.—*Our Home Islands.*

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

DAVID ANOINTED KING.

THE murder of his protector, Abner, filled Ish-bosheth with dismay, and greatly troubled the people of Israel, whose leader he had been in war. Very soon after his loss two captains in the army conspired against Ish-bosheth and stabbed him in his palace at Mahanaim, whilst he lay asleep during the heat of the day. Having cut off his head, the assassins carried it to David, expecting to be welcomed by him at Hebron; and they even dared to speak thus of their crime: *The Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and of his seed* (2 Sam. iv. 8). But David, viewing them with horror, said, that as he had slain the man at Ziklag who thought to be rewarded for his tidings of Saul's death, more surely still would he remove from off the earth *wicked men* who had *slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed.* He then commanded some of his young men to put them both to death, and, as a warning to others, he commanded them to cut off the traitors' hands and feet and hang them up by the pool in Hebron. *But they took the head of Ish-bosheth and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.*

The only remaining descendant of Saul was Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, who had been lamed by a fall in his childhood. As he could not possibly reign in the place of Ish-bosheth, all the people resolved to have David for their king. From every tribe, therefore, men were sent to him, saying, *Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king in Hebron* (2 Sam. v. 1-3), and there David made a solemn covenant with them before the Lord; after which, for the third time in his life, the holy anointing oil was poured on his head, and then a

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joyous three-days' festival was held to celebrate the event.

Thus David had his reward for refusing to use wrong means for deliverance from Saul, and from the day of his anointing *God established his throne for ever;* his descendants were kings of Judah from generation to generation, and *the King of kings and Lord of lords,* our Lord Jesus Christ, was *the root and the offspring of David* (Rev. xix. 16; xxii. 16). God is ever faithful to His promises, and will most surely fulfil them after He has led His children through such trials as He sees will be for their endless good.

No less than 300,000 warriors came to David from the different tribes. *All these men of war that could keep rank came with a perfect heart to Hebron;* and many brought presents to the king, *for there was joy in Israel* (1 Chron. xii. 38, 40). Having so powerful an army, David's first act was to lay siege to Jebus, or Jerusalem; and he took it from the Jebusites and made it his capital, and built himself a palace on the hill of Zion, which is therefore often spoken of as '*the city of David.*'

Then, with great rejoicings, he brought the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjath-jearim, to be in the midst of his people at Jerusalem; so that David's capital became *the city of God.*

The king also made regulations for more solemn and stately services than had ever been held in the sanctuary of the Lord, and he longed to show his love for God by building a house in which the ark should dwell, and where the people should assemble for public worship. God did not permit him to do this, but He allowed him to collect treasures and materials for it, and gave him a pattern according to which, after his death, the Temple was to be built by Solomon his son.

David's heart was full of zeal and love for the Lord; for His house, His day, His Word, and the honour of His holy Name: so that, in the midst of his other duties, he found much time for prayer and praise and the study of God's law; as we learn from the Psalms which the Holy Spirit inspired him to write, and which made him *the sweet psalmist,* not only *of Israel,* but of the Church of God in every age and every land. And far above all the human praise which has been bestowed upon these wonderful hymns, is the fact that our blessed Lord Himself uttered on the cross the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, *My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* And at the very last breathed out His soul in the words of the 31st Psalm: *Into Thy hands I commend My spirit.*

But, alas! even David fell into very great sins; and although he repented so truly that he was forgiven and taken back into God's favour, yet many years of his long reign were, in consequence of his sins, overshadowed by dark clouds of trial and sorrow. At seventy years of age David died, *full of days, riches, and honour; and Solomon his son reigned in his stead* (1 Chron. xxix. 28).

When we see how David was preserved from his enemies and rescued from dangers, and how his tears of godly sorrow were turned into songs of praise, we may say in his own words, *Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every side* (Ps. xxxii. 11: Prayer-book version); and that *we* may be able to take these blessed words for our own, may God give each of us grace to use from our hearts a short prayer from the next psalm: *Let Thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us; like as we do put our trust in Thee.*

THE FIR-TREES.

A FABLE.

'WELL, all I can say is, that I wish I was moved out of this place; what with one branch broken, and another all chafed, my life here is certainly most miserable.'

These were the words that any of my young readers might have heard if they had been passing a certain fir-plantation, and had had sharp enough ears.

This plantation was situated at the bottom of a hill, and had only been planted about a year, so that the Fir-trees were quite young and tender, and they were, moreover, planted very thick, because the owner of the property thought that a hard winter was coming which would kill a great

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David anointed King.

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The Fir Trees.

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many of the young trees, and so he had planted them thick that there should still be enough left.

The young Fir-tree that said this was in the very centre of the plantation, and was not in a very comfortable position, for there were other young Fir-trees pushing their branches into him everywhere, and knocking off his buds.

'Why can't I be placed somewhere where people can see me and admire my beauty?'

These were the words that he went on saying to another young Fir-tree that was placed next to him, and was in nearly as bad a plight as himself, but who replied, 'Well, it certainly is uncomfortable here, but as we are here we may as well make the best of it, and try to move our branches out of the way of the other branches, and not shove the other branches rudely out of the way, else we shall break our own.'

Weeks rolled by, and still the two Fir-trees were in the same place, but one day the owner of the property came by, saw how thick the plantation was, and told his men to transplant some of the young trees immediately, before they got too big to be moved.

It so happened that the first tree which complained was moved, and the other was not; the men took up the first young tree and carried it to the top of a high hill where he stood almost alone, and where there were only two or three companions to protect him from the wind and cold.

For a little time he liked it well enough, but then—how the wind did blow! It was so cold that the Fir-tree was nearly frozen to death. The snow came down, and the hail, and the rain, and the frost, all had a turn at the unfortunate Fir-tree, but he comforted himself with the thought that it would be better when summer was come. At last summer did come, but it was not much better, the sun burnt up all the earth round its roots, and scorched up all its branches, so that it soon had not a morsel of green left, and was in a very short time completely burnt up and killed.

'But how did the other little tree get on?' you will say.

Well, after so many of the trees round him were moved, he had plenty of room to put out his branches without any fear of their being hurt by others; and although the winter was very sharp,—so sharp, indeed, as almost to kill the other young trees,—yet, as he was at the bottom of a hill, the hill protected him from a great deal of the cold, and at last spring found him quite ready to put out his buds and clothe himself in his summer dress.

But when summer came, why did not he, too, get burnt up? Because at the bottom of the hill there was a little stream which wetted the earth close to the Fir-tree's roots, so that although the sun was very hot indeed, yet as his roots were always cool, he always looked pleasant.

Now do you know why he was so happy? Because he did not mind staying where he was, but tried to make the best of it, and waited for better times.

And do you know why the other came to such a bad end? Because he was so impatient, and wished to be moved in such a hurry, and to be placed where everybody could see him.

And it is just the same with us when we are discontented, whereas if we are contented with what has been appointed for us, we shall be happy all our life long.

A. L. W.

A STORY FOR CHRISTMAS-EVE.

Translated from the German.

MOST children have seen a Christmas-tree, and many know that the pretty and pleasant custom of hanging gifts on its boughs comes from Germany, but perhaps few have heard or read the story that is told to little German children respecting the origin of this custom. I read it the other day in one of their story-books, and though it is more fanciful than the tales English children are accustomed to hear, yet I think it would please them, so I shall translate it. The story is called 'THE LITTLE STRANGER.'

In a small cottage on the borders of a forest lived a poor labourer, who gained a scanty living by cutting wood. He had a wife and two children who helped him in

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his work. The boy's name was Valentine, and the girl was called Mary, they were obedient, good children, and a great comfort to their parents. One winter evening this happy little family were sitting quietly round the hearth, the snow and the wind raging outside, while they ate their supper of dry bread, when a gentle tap was heard on the window, and a childish voice called from without, 'Oh, let me in, pray, I am a poor little child with nothing to eat and no home to go to, and I shall die of cold and hunger unless you let me in!'

Valentine and Mary jumped up from the table and ran to open the door, saying, 'Come in, poor little child, we have not much to give you, but whatever we have we will share with you.'

The stranger-child came in and warmed his frozen hands and feet at the fire, and the children gave him the best they had to eat, saying, 'You must be tired, too, poor child, lie down on our bed, we can sleep on the bench for one night.'

Then said the little strange child, 'Thank God for all your kindness to me.'

So they took their little guest into their sleeping-room, laid him on the bed, covered him over, and said to each other, 'How thankful we ought to be, we have warm rooms and a cosy bed, while this poor child has only heaven for his roof and the cold earth for his sleeping-place.'

When their father and mother went to bed, Mary and Valentine lay quite contentedly on the bench near the fire, saying, before they fell asleep, 'The stranger-child will be so happy to-night in his warm bed.'

These kind children had not slept many hours before Mary awoke, and softly whispered to her brother, 'Valentine, dear, wake! and listen to the sweet music under the window.'

Then Valentine rubbed his eyes and listened. It was sweet music indeed, and sounded like beautiful voices singing to the tones of a harp:—

'Oh, Holy Child, we greet thee! bringing
Sweet strains of harp to aid our singing.
'Thou, Holy Child, in peace art sleeping,
While we our watch without are keeping.
'Blest be the house wherein Thou liest,
Happiest on earth—to heaven the nighest.'

The children listened while a solemn joy filled their hearts, then they stepped softly to the window to see who might be without.

In the East was a streak of rosy dawn, and in its light they saw a group of children standing before the house clothed in silver garments, holding golden harps in their hands. Amazed at this sight, the children were gazing still out of the window when a light tap caused them to turn round. There stood the stranger-child before them clad in a golden dress, with a gleaming radiance round his curling hair. 'I am the little Christ-child,' he said, 'who wanders through the world bringing peace and happiness to good children. You took me in and cared for me this night when you thought I was only a poor child, and now you shall have my blessing for what you have done.'

A fir-tree grew near the house, from this he broke a twig which he planted in the ground, saying, 'This twig shall become a tree, and shall bring forth fruit year by year for you.'

No sooner had he done this than he vanished, and with him the little choir of angels. But the fir-branch grew and became a Christmas-tree, and on its branches hung golden apples and silver nuts every Christmas-tide.

Such is the story told to German children concerning their beautiful Christmas-trees, and though we know that the real little Christ-child can never be wandering, cold and homeless again in our world, inasmuch as He is safe in heaven by His Father's side, yet we may gather from this story the same truth which the Bible plainly tells us, that any one who helps a Christian child in distress, it will be counted unto him as if he had indeed done it unto Christ Himself. 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.' H. A. F.

A GLASS OF COLD WATER.

LITTLE Anna lay in a bed, near the window. The deep flush of fever was on her cheeks. In the same room was her brother, Robert, busily engaged in making a ship. His poor sister could ill bear the

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noise of the hammer; but he worked on, as though he did not trouble himself much about her. Was he not an unkind boy?

'Do, please, dear Robert, give me a glass of water! my throat is so dry, and my head aches so much,' said Anna, in a gentle voice. Again was the loud knocking of the hammer heard; and once more Anna begged for a glass of water, when Robert called out sharply,—

'Wait a minute, Anna, I can't fetch it yet.'

At last, he poured her out a glass, from a jug which was warm with standing where the sun shone upon it.

'O, not that water, Robert; please fetch me a little fresh from the spring!'

'Don't plague me so, Anna, you see how busy I am. I am sure this water is good enough.'

Knock, knock, went the hammer again.

'O, my poor head,' said the little invalid, softly, as she took the glass, drank a little, and then lay back again on the pillow.

That was *the last time* that Anna asked Robert for a proof of brotherly love. The next day she died; and as the little coffin stood in the room ready to be carried to the grave, no one shed more bitter tears than the little boy who would rather have his own selfish way than listen to the wishes of a dying sister.

Dear children, are you trying to be affectionate and unselfish? or do you only care to

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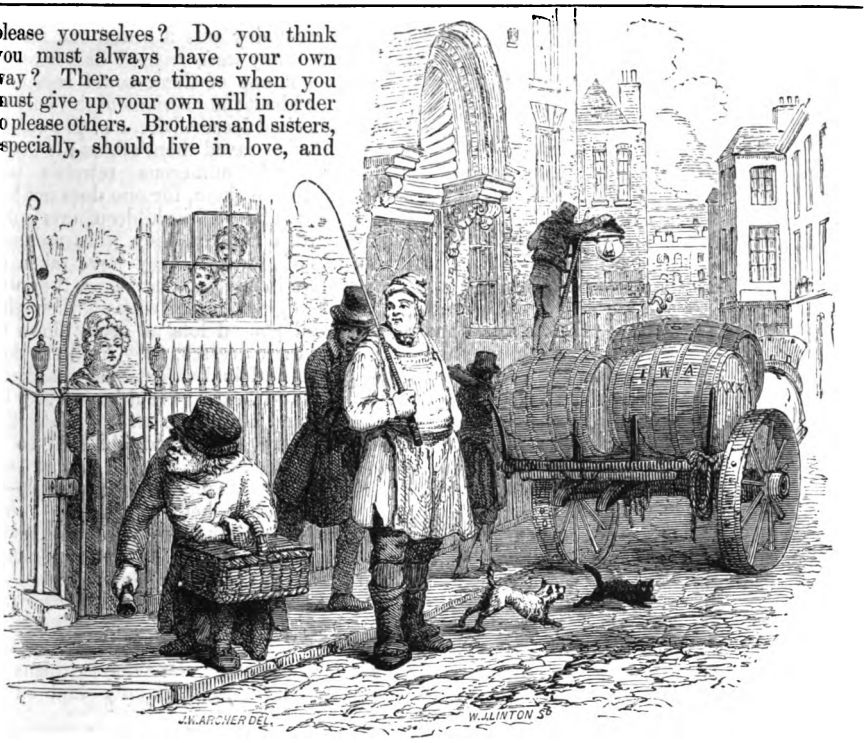
please yourselves? Do you think you must always have your own way? There are times when you must give up your own will in order to please others. Brothers and sisters, especially, should live in love, and



each should strive to make the others happy.

We know some who willingly give up their toys if another wishes to play with them for a short time. How happy that little girl is, if she can lend the new book to her brother! and how willingly that brother sits by his sick sister for hours together! He is very glad to play; but he would rather give up all, than cause her sorrow and pain.

Jesus says, that a cup of cold water given in His name, shall not lose its reward. He sees every little deed of love, and if we give anything to any one *out of love to Him*, He will never forget it. There will come a time when each one will look back on what he has done and said. How careful, therefore, should we be only to speak and do that which is lovely and right.

Children, be kind to one another, and live in peace and love.—*Der Kinderfreund.*

THE MUFFIN-MAN'S BELL.

TINKLE, tinkle, tinkle:' 'tis the muffin-man's bell, you see.
'Tinkle, tinkle,' says the muffin-man's bell;
'Any crumpets, any muffins, any cakes for your tea?
There are plenty here to sell.'

'Tinkle,' says the little bell, clear and bright;
'Tinkle, tinkle,' says the muffin-man's bell;
We have had bread and milk for supper to-night,
And some nice plum-cake as well.

'Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,' says the little bell again,
But it sounds quite far away;
'If you don't try my muffins and cakes, it is plain
I must take them home to-day.'

Aunt Effie's Rhymes.

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TALKING IN THEIR SLEEP.

(*Concluded from page* 163.)

'WHY, it is a very light night,' said granny, 'and the poor little things must have got up and looked out; very likely they thought it was morning, dear little souls; they must have tried to wake me for some time, for they were so tired that they dropped off to sleep again the minute I understood. I'm afraid I'm getting a little deaf, my dears,' said the poor grandmother, who had heard nothing distinctly for the last five years.

'We must get you to bed again, Granny.'

'Yes, my dears; I'm quite nervous and exhausted, and I have lost my shoe.'

To this day not one of the three can tell how that shoe got into the Rector's coal-scuttle, where it was found.

The father and mother went up to see the dear little children who had saved them all, and found them fast asleep. The grandmother went to bed, but not to sleep. She was up five times before morning came, peering out shouting:

'They've come again, they've come again. Oh no, my dears, I beg your pardon, it's only the holly-bush,' or ejaculating, 'What did you say?' to the sleeping and now silent children, or stumbling over the fender, and lying on the floor half dead with terror at the noise she herself had made, or lighting a candle with much appearance of mystery and looking at the clock, or ringing the bell just to see if the wire was in order. The Rector, too, was restless, but fortunately he knew the grandmother too well to take any notice of the noise above his head.

She afterwards said that no one but herself knew what she had gone through that night, and indeed this must have been true. An old lady could hardly take such an amount of violent exercise without feeling it a good deal.

The next day was a grand one for the children; they were treated like heroines, though not one of them could remember anything about the previous night, only the eldest had had dreadful dreams. No wonder.

But having saved them all, as the grandmother said, numerous rewards were showered upon them, for one does not hear of such useful little children every day. They had a holiday, they were presented with lots of new toys, they were taken out for a drive in the pony carriage, they were allowed to go to dinner without their pinafores, and poured lots of gravy down the lining of their dresses, they used the doll's tea-things and had an extravagant feast—the second girl eating eight buns; they had a party, and stayed up an hour later than usual. Were ever good children so rewarded before?

And the next time visitors called,—as they soon did to hear about that narrow escape,—the children were brought forward and loudly praised, both by the grandmother and friends.

'And the father's bravery was surprising, my dear,' Granny added, praising everybody but herself; 'such a fearless man I have never known; the armed ruffians fled before him, though he only had on his dressing-gown.'

Granny kept a close watch out night after night for the next month; disregarding the winter's cold, she would jump up two or three times about midnight, often shouting, but never again having any cause for it.

Everybody talked about it as a miraculous escape—everybody, except two naughty lads in the village, who were seized with fits of laughter every time the subject was mentioned; two naughty lads who had long coveted those flaming crimson apples of the Rector's, and who had been very near getting them one eventful night.

And nobody knew that if nurse had not gone out for a holiday on that same eventful night, and if Granny had not determined on taking her place in the nursery—dear grandmother, she was so fond of the children!—there would have been fewer apple dumplings at the Rectory that autumn than ever before or since. But nobody

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praised her; the children had all the honour and glory, the children, whose only merit was that they talked in their sleep! Well, well, they are not the only people in the world who have had undeserved rewards.

The ladder was nowhere to be seen in the morning, so if Granny had only looked out at the right time, she would have had another glorious opportunity for shouting, for the boys must have returned to carry it away. UTER.

KINDNESS.

A LITTLE word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed the heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere.

A word—a look—has crushed to earth
Full many a budding flower,
Which, had a smile but owned its birth,
Would bless life's darkest hour.

Then deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak;
The face you wear—the thoughts you bring—
A heart may heal or break.

WHITTIER.

UNDER WATER.

A RELIGIOUS couple had for many long years prayed for their son, but it seemed as if all their cries were in vain. Their son, who, as a boy, had been giddy and obstinate, turned out a bad, ungodly youth, who prepared grievous trouble and anxiety for his parents, and at last, when their house became too strict for him, ran away and became a sailor.

One day on board ship, he had mounted the rigging, and when there lost his balance, and fell overboard. A boat was at once lowered to pick him up, but as the vessel was sailing quickly at the time, it was a long time before the young man could be reached, but at last he was brought on board seemingly lifeless.

The ship's doctor used all possible means of restoring him to life, but it seemed as if they would prove fruitless. His comrades had given up all hope of being able to save him, when he gave a few signs of life. The attempts for reviving him were now begun afresh, and after a short time the young man opened his eyes and then uttered the cry of joy, 'Jesus Christ has saved me.'

Then he was silent again, and it was a long time before he was able to relate what he had experienced when in the water he had struggled with death. 'When I fell down from the mast and recognised my danger, it seemed as if all the sins of my whole life stood before me. I beheld my terribly great guilt and did not fear death so much as the punishment which would follow it. In this anguish of soul a text came to my recollection which I had often heard my father repeat, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." To Him I cried in my trouble, and I hope that He has pardoned me, and I am sure that he has saved me.'

His after life proved that his penitence was really sincere, and not only the passing effects of the fear of approaching death. He henceforth led a new life. He returned to his parents who received him with great joy; he now became their comfort and support, and lived as an honest and godly man. J. F. C.

PUSSY'S BREAKFAST.

HERE'S my baby's bread and milk,
For her lip as soft as silk;
Here's the basin clean and neat,
Here's the spoon of silver sweet,
Here's the stool, and here's the chair,
For my little lady fair.

No, you must not spill it out,
And drop the bread and milk about,
But let it stand before you flat;
And pray remember Pussy-cat—
Poor old Pussy-cat, that purrs,
All so patiently for hers.

True, she runs about the house,
Catching now and then a mouse;
But, though she thinks it very nice,
That only makes a tiny slice:
So don't forget that you should stop,
And leave poor Puss a little drop.

Nursery Rhymes.

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Pussy's Breakfast.

Scripture Pictures, '*DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE,*' *will be begun in the January Number.*

The Volume of the 'PRIZE' for 1870 is now Ready.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'BLOWING BUBBLES,' *will be* given *with the January Number of the* 'CHILDREN'S PRIZE,' 1871. *New Subscribers are requested to order their* '*Prize*' *immediately.*

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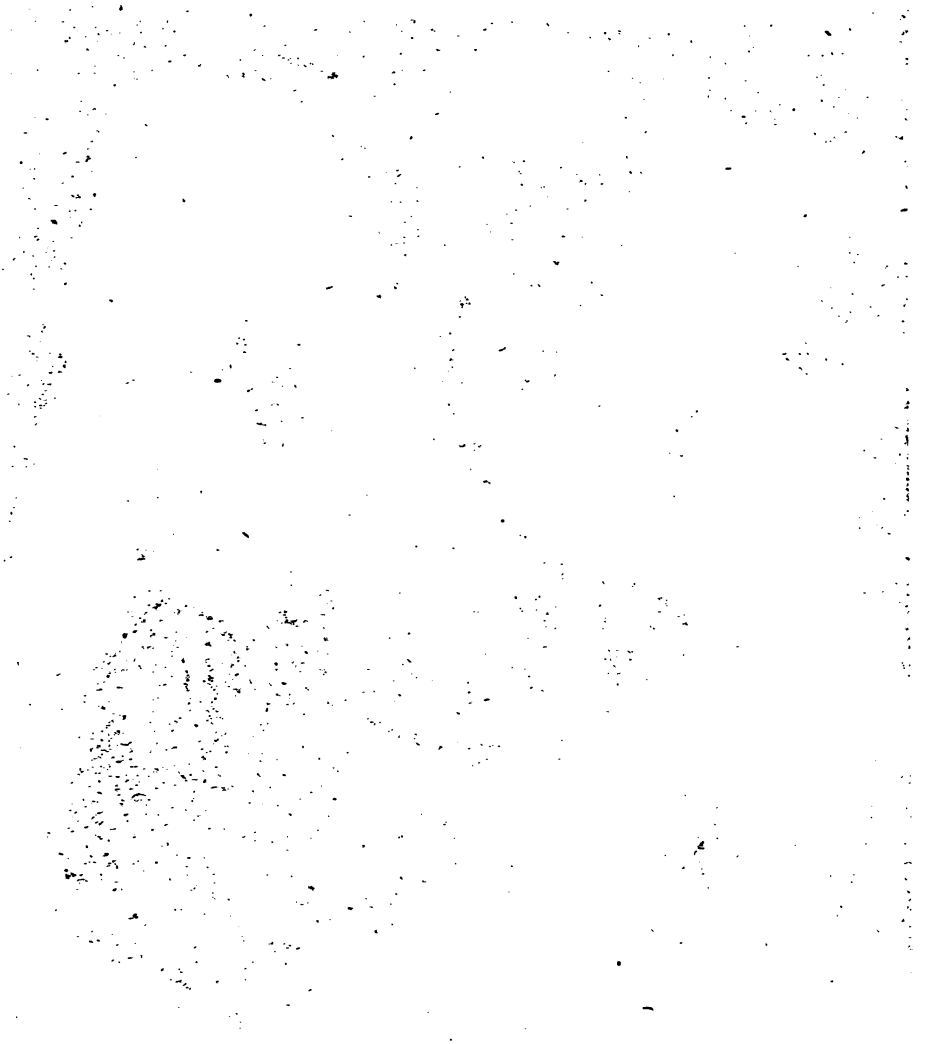

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BLOWING BUBBLES.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE.

EDITED BY J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.

1871

LONDON.
PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS BY W. WELLS GARDNER, 10 PATERNOSTER ROW.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. I.] JANUARY, 1871. [One Penny.

The Children at Breakfast

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THE CHRISTMAS GIFT;

OR, HOW SHALL WE SPEND IT?

A Tale for Little Children.

'HOW cold it is—oh, dear!—how cold it is!' cried little Hugh Christie, as he ran to the nursery fire one snowy morning. 'I wish mother wouldn't have this tiresome fender all round, and then I could get warm:' and Master Hugh put his blue hands through the rails and stretched them out until they nearly touched the bars.

'Me, too,' said little Nesta, pushing her little self against her brother; 'me, too, Hughie, I quite cold.'

But here nurse called both children away to breakfast, and soon the steaming basins of bread and milk warmed them through and made them glow again.

'How pretty the snow is!' said Nesta. 'Look, Hughie, there 's no marks all along the road except where the dickies have been; how sorry I shall be when the people come up the street and spoil it!'

'Here they come, then,' said Hugh, jumping up on his chair; 'look what great foot-marks.'

'Sit still and eat your breakfast,' said nurse, angrily; but Hugh was too intent on the window to heed her, and he reached over to watch the figures getting nearer.

'Why,' he cried, 'one 's the postman; I hope he won't come up our doorsteps and spoil them. But he will, though,' he added, as a quick run announced the postman's arrival, followed by a loud knock.

'It 's too bad,' said Nesta, 'the street is quite spoiled; what a pity it is people will have letters!'

'I don't know that,' said her brother; 'I should like a letter myself, that 's one thing; but I never get one.'

'If you don't sit down and eat your breakfast, Master Hugh, I'll take it away,' said the nurse.

But, although at this threat Hughie gave his attention to his basin, his tongue went on hard and fast, and Nesta's, too.

'Ah, here 's a letter for nurse,' he said, as the housemaid came in with one in her hand. 'Then it was *your* fault, nurse, that the postman spoiled our steps.'

'You 're mistaken,' said nurse, as she took it: '*I* am not "Master Hugh Christie."'

'Is it for me?' asked Hugh, opening his large blue eyes with surprise. 'Who can have written to me?'

'Only see,' said Nesta, 'it 's tied round with silk! What can it be?'

'Why, there must be something in it,' said nurse.

'Open it! open it! Quick, Hughie dear,' said Nesta.

'I can't undo the knot,' said Hugh. 'Cut it, nurse; do please cut it.'

So nurse took out her scissors and cut the silk, and with hands trembling with eagerness Hughie tore open the envelope.

Inside he found two.

'Oh, what 's written on it, nurse?'

'"Miss Christie,"' read nurse, slowly. 'Why, Nesta, that 's you; and here 's yours, Hughie,' she added, reading the other: '"Master Christie," sure enough. Which shall we open first?'

'Mine!' 'No, mine!' cried each one in a high state of expectation.

'Hughie 's,' said nurse, 'because he 's the eldest;' so Hugh, in great wonderment, opened his, and found—only another packet inside—opened that, and found—oh, what surprise!—a round gold piece of money!

'Half-a-sovereign!' cried nurse, amazed.

'But who is it from?' asked Hugh, tightly holding it.

'"A Christmas gift to Hugh, to spend as he likes,"' read nurse; 'but it doesn't say who from. Now let 's see Nesta 's.'

Just the same; first a little packet, then a golden piece, for 'little Nesta to spend as she likes.'

'You 're not sorry now, are you, Hugh, that people have letters?'

'No, no!' cried both children together; 'but who can have sent it?'

Ah, that was the question.

'Let 's ask mother;' and, forgetful of pinafores to be changed or hands to be wiped, away they ran, up one flight, down another, to their mother's room.

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'O mother! such a wonderful thing! Read this, and this;' and both climbed on the bed where their mother lay. 'Did you send it?'

But no. Mother was as much surprised as themselves.

'Did father?'

Mother didn't think so, but they might run and ask.

So down to the dining-room they ran. All in vain. Father was not in the secret. So they looked at the postmark; but it was only 'London.' Who could the kind sender be?

But after a while this all-important question gave way to another,—

'*How* shall we spend it?'

'You had better think well about it,' mother said; 'ten shillings is a large sum for such little people.'

'Will it buy much?' asked little Nesta.

'Yes, many things,' said mother. But she told them they must settle for themselves; so hand in hand they went back to the nursery to decide. How many things they thought of as they sat together by the nursery fire! Yet they could decide upon nothing.

Hugh thought of a cricket-bat. Nesta thought of a doll. But at last they agreed to put the two presents together and buy something which both could play with.

'Will it buy a carpet croquet?' asked Nesta.

'No, no,' said Hugh; 'we don't want that. Will it buy a rocking-horse?'

'We don't want that,' said Nesta. 'Won't it buy a grocer's shop?'

'No, no; how silly you are, Nesta!' and I'm sorry to say Hugh began to get vexed, and said he'd have his separate again if she were so silly.

'But, Hughie dear,' said Nesta, 'don't be cross, I thought you'd like that.'

'No,' said Hugh, looking lovingly at his golden piece; 'I know what,—I won't spend it at all. I'll keep it.'

'Oh, dear,' said Nesta, 'it was meant to be spent; I shall spend mine, and I shall buy that big doll in Day's shop-window, if you don't put yours to it.'

'Well, I won't!' said Hugh, angrily; 'so if you like to spend it on that ugly thing, do.'

Nesta answered angrily; and that sad thing, a quarrel between a little brother and sister, quite spoilt the pleasure of their present. We won't write down the sad words they said, but the end was that Hugh wrapped his piece up in paper and put it by in his drawer, and Nesta put hers in her pocket to buy the doll the first time she went out.

When the children went down after tea, mother asked how they meant to spend their present, and was quite surprised to find them of different minds.

'I mean to keep mine to look at,' said Hugh; 'but that goose, Nesta, says she shall buy a doll. Silly little thing!'

'Well,' said mother, 'it sounds almost as sensible as keeping money to look at. Besides, I think it was given you to spend.'

Hugh looked doubtful a moment, and then said at least he must wait until he could go out to see.

Now it so happened that the weather prevented this for some days, and more discussions followed with no better result. Nurse said she wished the money had never come; for she had never known the children so disagreeable, as indeed they were. But so it always is; money is the source of much trouble if it be not well used, but it can give much pleasure if it be spent in a right spirit.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

RHYMES FOR LITTLE FOLK.

A BIRD sat on a hawthorn-tree,
And sang as blythe as blythe could be;
Never was heard a merrier song
Than sang that bird the whole day long:
'Twas strange to hear so loud a note
Proceed from such a little throat.

A pretty nest was in that tree,
In which dwelt little birdies three,
Who chirrupped, chirrupped all day long,
In answer to the old bird's song;
While, pleased her little ones to see,
His fond mate hopped about with glee.

Alas! some thoughtless boys one day
Stole nest and little ones away;
And from that time no more was heard
The merry song of that sweet bird;
But, with his gentle mate, flies he,
Sad and forlorn, from tree to tree.

E. D. C. T.

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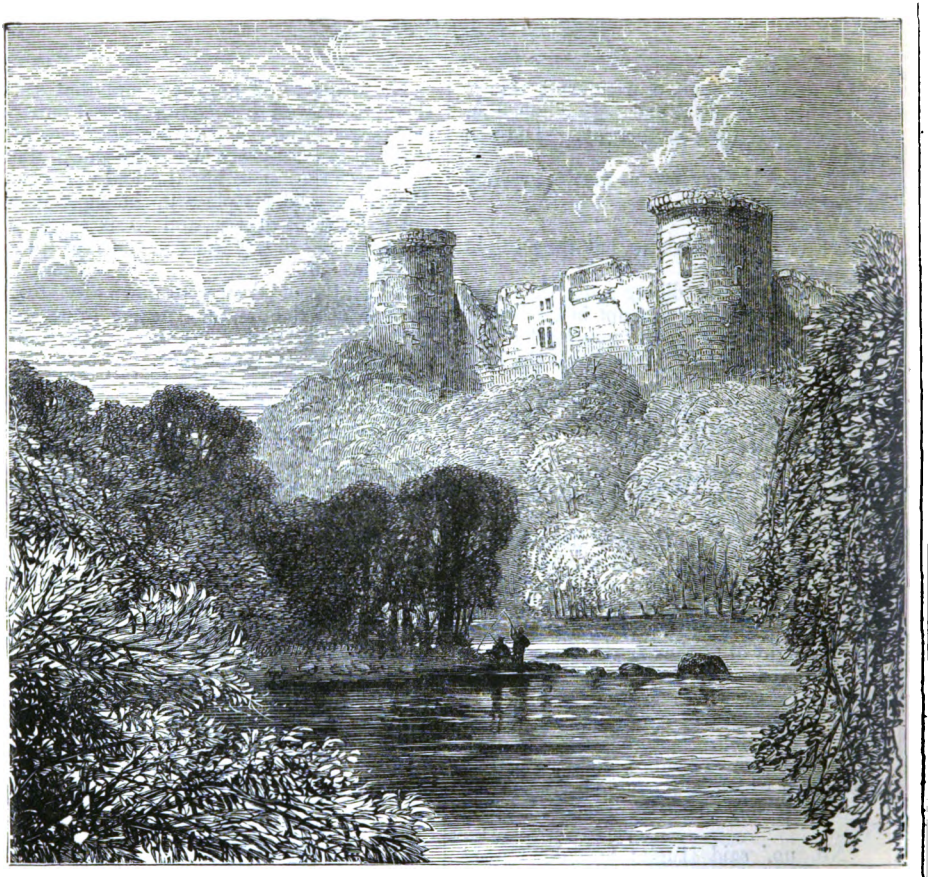

BOTHWELL CASTLE.

BOTHWELL Castle is a very ancient fortress on the banks of the Clyde, a few miles from Glasgow. It is now a ruin; but as the walls are more than fifteen feet thick, and in some places sixty feet high, it must have been a castle of great strength.

No one knows when this castle was built, but in the reign of Edward I. it was in the possession of the English Earl of Pembroke, who fled to it when he was defeated by Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, at the battle of Loudon Hill in A.D. 1307. But the English earl did not hold it long, for, seven years after, when the English army was completely defeated by Robert Bruce, at the battle of Bannockburn, the English nobles who were made prisoners were shut up in Bothwell Castle.

In those old times, when 'might was right,' this castle passed through many hands to the Earl of Bothwell. From him it came to 'Archibald the Grim,' Earl of Douglas, by whose family it was held till 1445, when they forfeited it. But after many more changes of owners, it came back again to the family of Douglas in 1715, and it still remains in their hands.

Lord Douglas has a modern mansion close to the old castle.

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'Good-bye, darling.'

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THE NEW GOVERNESS.

'GOOD-BYE, darling!' said Ellen Weir to her sister Annie, who with boxes packed was waiting for the cab to come to take her to the station. 'I hope you will like being a governess; you do like children, I know, and that Mrs. Western's will be a pleasant home.'

'Oh, I dare say I shall be very comfortable soon,' said Annie, as cheerfully as she could; 'and I shall write and tell you all about my new life.'

'Good-bye, dear ones,' said Mrs. Western to her two little girls, 'be good and obedient to Miss Weir; I expect you will be quite fond of her when I come back.'

It was rather a pity that Mrs. Western, who was such a kind, pleasant person, should have to leave home just as her new governess was coming, but she could not help it, and Miss Weir really meant to do her best: and for two days all went well, but the third day Jessie Western, who was not a strong child, had a headache, and could not say her lessons, and Miss Weir thought she was obstinate, and everything went wrong. That day Milly Western wrote to her mother, and Miss Weir wrote to her sister.

This was Miss Weir's letter:—

'Dear Ellen,—I am so disheartened to-day. At first I thought I was getting on so well with these little girls Milly is really clever, and Jessie seemed such an affectionate child; but now all is different. Jessie would not learn a simple lesson this morning, though I sat by her and explained every difficulty, and Milly was quite pert when I sent Jessie to her room as a punishment. I very nearly cried with disappointment, and had to leave the room lest Milly should see the tears that would fall. Do you think I shall ever learn to manage children? I wish Mrs. Western was at home, perhaps she would help me.

Your affectionate sister,

'ANNIE WEIR.'

This was Milly's letter:—

'My dearest Mother,—We liked our new gov'ness very much at first, but we don't now. She was cross this morning with Jessie, who had one of her headaches, and when I wanted to go to Jessie, who was sent to her room for a punnishment, she called me pert. And then I spose she was in a passion, for she ran out and banged the schoolroom door, which you said we was'nt to do, never!

'Your affectionate child,

'MILLY.'

Milly was not a much better writer than speller, so she took her letter to Miss Weir, and asked her to put it in an envelope and direct it to Mrs. Western, which Miss Weir did, the child looking on; and then Miss Weir put her own letter into another envelope, and directed, in a moment of abstraction, that also to Mrs. Western, who was first greatly puzzled, and then amused, by the contents of her letters; but as she was returning home next day she did not think it worth while to answer them.

Meantime Miss Weir found out Jessie's headache, and brought her eau-de-cologne for it, forgiving her her lessons, and coaxing her, so that Jessie whispered to her, 'I did not mean to be naughty this morning.'

And Miss Weir whispered back, 'And I would not have punished my little Jessie if I had known she was ill.'

So all was right between those two, and in the evening Miss Weir talked to the children about her home and her sister Ellen, and her little sick brother Peter, and ——, and here Miss Weir made an odd noise in her throat, jumped off her chair, and ran out of the room.

'Banging the door again!' said Milly, who was rather a pert child.

'O Milly,' said Jessie, reproachfully, 'she was going to cry, and she did not want us to see; you know she has just left her mother and all of them.'

'I never knew grown-up people cried,' said Milly, thoughtfully, a little sorry that she had blamed her governess; and when Miss Weir came back she sidled up to her, and brought her a footstool, and Miss Weir knew that she had won over Milly, too.

That night Milly said to Jessie in bed, 'I never knew governesses were like *that*, Jessie; I always thought they were stuck-

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up and cross. I believe Miss Weir never knew you had a headache to-day; I wish I had not been pert to her.'

When Mrs. Western came back, Milly ran to her and said, 'O mother, we like Miss Weir now; please burn my silly letter.'

When the children were in bed, Mrs. Western put Miss Weir's letter into her hand, saying, 'My dear, I think you put a wrong direction on this letter; I read it all through before I could make it out.'

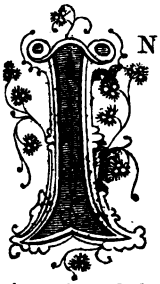
Miss Weir blushed deeply. 'O Mrs. Western, my foolish letter, I will burn it; indeed, I think quite differently now, and I am sure the little girls like me. Are you vexed with me that I wrote that? I am glad it never went home.'

'Milly has asked me to burn her letter, too,' said Mrs. Western, laughing; 'but I really think you must see it first, especially as the little puss says she also thinks quite differently now.'

Miss Weir wrote a very different letter next time to her sister Ellen, and the little Westerns tell their mother that they think Miss Weir is the best governess in the world. H. A. F.

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

REBEKAH.



IN our picture we see how the damsel Rebekah met with Abraham's chief servant, who had taken a journey of about four hundred miles to find a wife for his master's son Isaac. We hope that the readers of the *Prize* will turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, and read the account of what happened in that eventful day of Rebekah's life, more than 3700 years ago. Her home was at that time in the part of Asia called Mesopotamia, which lay between the great rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and though some of the customs spoken of in the chapter may seem strange to us, they are still quite common in Eastern lands.

Perhaps some who look at the picture will wonder why Abraham sent so far to seek a wife for his son. The reason was, that, in obedience to God's command, Abraham and Isaac were living in the land of Canaan where, except their own household, all the men and women were idolaters. Instead of trusting to the hope that Isaac might teach a heathen wife to love and serve his God, Abraham very wisely resolved that the maiden chosen for so great an honour should be one of his own God-fearing kindred from Haran, a town far away to the east of Canaan.

But why not let Isaac himself take the journey? Most likely his father feared that if the young man went amongst his relations in Mesopotamia, he might be tempted to stay there altogether, whereas it was God's will that he and his family should dwell in Canaan, the Land of Promise. A very faithful servant was therefore sent upon this important errand; and it is most likely that this was Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's steward, of whom we read in the 15th chapter of Genesis (verse 2). The man took with him some other men-servants, and ten camels laden with everything necessary for the long journey, and also with presents for the bride and her family.

When they drew near Haran they stopped at a well outside the town, because, as it was the evening, the servant knew that very soon all the damsels of Haran would come there with their pitchers to draw fresh, cool water for the eventide meal of their families. By watching the maidens there, and especially by noticing how they would behave to an entire stranger such as he was, the man would learn far more about their character than if he had gone first to their homes in the town, and had told them who he was. But the good old servant had learnt not to trust to his own opinion alone in such a case; and so, while resting and waiting by the well, he earnestly prayed that the damsel who should first *willingly* grant his request, by giving him and his camels some water, might be the one chosen by God to become Isaac's wife. Even before he had done speaking, there came, bearing her pitcher upon her shoulder, a damsel who was very fair to look upon. As soon as she heard

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Rebekah.

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The New Volume of *The Prize.*

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him say, *Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher*, she not only gave some to him (and no doubt to his men also, if they were near at hand), but drew water for all his ten camels as well.

Whilst the servant watched her filling her pitcher again and again, and emptying it into the trough by the well-side for the weary, thirsty animals to drink, her active kindness seemed so exactly an answer to his prayer, that he ventured to give her a golden ear-ring and two still more valuable golden bracelets, saying, *Whose daughter art thou? Tell me; I pray thee, is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?*

How great must have been his joy when he found that the maiden was Rebekah, the daughter of Abraham's nephew, Bethuel, and therefore a suitable wife for Isaac! Without waiting until he should be alone, he lifted up his voice and blessed the Lord God of his master Abraham, for having led him to the house for which he was seeking; and it was from these words of thanksgiving that Rebekah found out who the stranger was.

She at once ran home to her mother with the news of his arrival, and soon her young brother Laban came to the well to invite the travellers to their house. The faithful servant would not eat the food they set before him, until he had told his errand (Gen. xxiv. 34–49). When he had spoken, Bethuel and Laban said, *The thing proceeded from the Lord. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife as the Lord hath spoken.*

Then the servant gave many precious gifts to Rebekah, Laban, and their mother. Next morning, when they asked the maiden, *Wilt thou go with this man?* she answered, *I will go.* And then, amidst the prayers and blessings of her relatives, she and her nurse Deborah set out with Abraham's servant upon their long and dangerous journey to the south of Canaan.

After many days' travelling, they saw Isaac in the distance, for he had come out at eventide to meditate in the fields. What happened when Rebekah and he met each other is told us in the last five verses of the chapter; and we know that Isaac proved as good a husband to Rebekah as he had been a dutiful son to Sarah. The rest of Rebekah's life was passed in Canaan, and to her was granted the honour of becoming the ancestress of the chosen people of God, and in due time of the promised Messiah Himself.

Not every deed of kindness, such as Rebekah's at the well, will meet with its reward in this life as hers did, but not one escapes the eye of God, who in the world to come will reward every man according to his work.

THE NEW VOLUME OF *THE PRIZE.*

THERE are thousands of children who get their *Prize* number every month and who keep their numbers clean and tidy from January to December, and then when the December number comes they look out from their safe place the other eleven numbers, and send them all to the bookbinder; he gets what is called 'a case' for them, which is made of coloured cloth, glued on strong mill-board, and stamped with gilt letters; and the twelve numbers are sewed together, and put under a heavy press, and are screwed down very tight to make them lie smooth, and to flatten down all 'dog-eared' pages; then they are glued at the back and put into their gay case, and they have their edges 'ploughed,' as it is called, with a very sharp blade fixed in a frame, which can be screwed down on them, and which cuts the tightly-pressed edges so clean and quick, that they shine as if polished and they are as white as if they had never been read.

Perhaps some richer little people have their numbers bound in leather, or in morocco, and with gilt edges, and the clever bookbinder can do that too; but though *we*, who love *The Prize*, of course think that no coat can be too good for it, yet we will not stop to tell how the gold leaf is

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put on the squeezed-up edges, and how they are 'burnished,' and made so smart and shining.

It often happens, that when our little friends come to look out their twelve numbers for the binder, they find that one or two are wanting—and generally the missing numbers are those of the summer or autumn months—when the children went to the sea-side. They rushed out to the shore too early, and came home too tired, to have any thought of reading, and so the first of the month slipped past, and *The Prize* was not bought; or perhaps, when in autumn there were tempting piles in every fruit-shop window, the penny that might have bought *The Prize* was exchanged for some yellow pears or red-cheeked apples. And we do not wonder at it at all.

But when December comes, and the *Prizes* are looked out for the binder, then the June, or July, or August number has to be bought to make up the volume.

And something like this happens in so many homes, that it has a curious effect on the fountain-head of *The Prize* in Paternoster Row. For in the summer months several thousand copies of *The Prize* that have been sent to the country booksellers are returned to London unsold, and they go again into the great store-house of *Prizes;* but not to stay long, for, when November and December come, then those thousands that were returned are again sent for by the booksellers, and they make a second journey down into the country, where they fill up the gaps left in the sets that are being looked out for the binder.

But thousands of other children know nothing about taking in *The Prize* for themselves, with their own money. A loving father, or a kind uncle, or perhaps a gentle elder sister, or a far-away cousin, brings, or sends by post, the whole volume of *The Prize*, as a present; and it is very often a pleasant surprise to find it on the breakfast-table on Christmas morning, directed to a youngster who does not get many letters, and brought by the queen's own messenger, the postman. You must guess for yourselves, whether the girl in the picture has just received *The Prize* volume, which she is showing to her friends, as a present, or whether it is her own numbers bound up into a volume.

I am not quite sure which would give the most pleasure to the little *Prize*-owner, but I think that perhaps she would enjoy showing her companions the numbers bought month by month with her 'very own money'—now that they are put into their smart new case—and pointing out the pictures that were 'old friends,' the stories that she liked best, and the poems she had almost learned by heart, more than she would enjoy having the whole twelve numbers coming at once in a bright-bound book.

But at any rate, where pennies were scarce, and where buying *The Prize* meant giving up the sweetstuff, or the red-cheeked apples, or the yellow pears, then I am sure that the volume that has come home from the binder's gives much more pleasure than the one that comes as a Christmas gift, for buying those numbers costs self-denial and hard work, and the remembrance of these always gives joy. They are rough and thorny branches, but the fruit we gather from them is sweet. J. E. C.

THE STOLEN PIECE OF HONEY.

LITTLE Laura came home from school and went into the pantry in search of something to eat. She found there several dishes filled with honey in the comb. The bees had died in consequence of the cold weather, and the honey was taken from the hive. Laura's first thought was, that she would run and ask her mother's leave to take a little of it; but she did not do so. Seizing a piece, she put it into her mouth in great haste. The pilfering was followed by a sharp scream. A bee, which was in a torpid state when the comb was taken from the hive, had been left in one of the cells. It was warmed into life by the heat of the pantry, and, when taken into Laura's mouth, thrust its sharp sting into her tongue.

The stings of *conscience* are often so sharp as to call forth cries and tears; and every sin we commit is certain to give them power to pain us.

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The Stolen Piece of Honey.

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Rose and Philip.

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ROSE AND PHILIP;

OR, TWO SORTS OF CLEVERNESS.

THE children were sitting at their father's feet playing with their toys. He was ill and weak, but still he liked to listen to their chatter, and to have them with him, for they had no mother.

'Philip,' said little Rose, 'how clever you are! you have caught the ball twenty-five times in the cup, and you can read long words, and do sums, and say Latin, and spin tops, and I can't do nothing!'

And poor Rose finished her ungrammatical little speech with a sigh. She was but six years old; but, compared to wise Philip of nine, she did think herself a very stupid, useless, little girl.

Philip smiled in a satisfied way; he thought himself a very clever boy.

'Never mind, Rose,' he said; 'you can't help it. You are only a girl, and perhaps some day you will learn to make my shirts, and then you will be of some use.'

Poor Rosy's face clouded still more at this; she was thinking of a certain little shaving-cloth she was hemming for father with great pains and labour; it was already covered with little red dots from her poor fingers. Sewing was certainly her worst form of torture, and the prospect of making Philip's shirts was not encouraging. Presently, however, her round face brightened.

'Philip, I can fetch things,' she said. 'Father's slippers, your books, and nurse's sewing.'

'Just like Ponto,' said Philip, laughing. 'Why, Rosy, you are no cleverer than the dog. What fun!'

Rosy did not think it fun, and felt half inclined to cry; but just then her father asked her to do something for him, which made her forget her troubles.

Winter was coming on quickly, and poor Mr. Elford, the children's father, grew worse as the cold days set in.

The doctor, an old friend of his, came one day, and, after looking very serious for a few minutes, told Mr. Elford that he must go to a warm country for the winter.

'And take one of the children with you,' said the doctor. 'This little woman here seems handy and clever; suppose we make a traveller of her. I don't think her father could do without her.'

Rosy stared, and Philip stared too, and at last he said, anxiously,—

'But, Dr. Bold, Rosy can't read, nor write, and she doesn't know multiplication, nor which is a threepence, and which is a fourpence.'

'And so you think she can't possibly be of any use to your father, Master Philip, do you? But I think differently. What father wants is some one to talk pleasant nonsense for him, and to look bright and smiling, and to run his messages, and bring him his toast and tea; that is the sort of person to be of use to him.'

Rosy looked very much pleased, for she knew she could do all this, and it really seemed as if Dr. Bold did not think her so very ignorant.

When the doctor was gone she said to Philip, 'Are there two sorts of cleverness? I think Dr. Bold thinks so: one sort like you, knowing Latin, grammar, and sums, and those things; and one little sort, knowing how to coax people, and bring them things, and rub their cold hands, like me.'

Philip was feeling a little disappointed that he was not chosen to go abroad with his father, so he only answered, rather shortly, 'Perhaps there are.'

But Rosy kissed him and said, 'Oh, thank you, dear Philip, I am glad! Now I need not be so vexed that I am so backward in reading, as nurse says. And, O Philip, won't you like to go to the big school while we are away, and have pocket-money and a bat, and play cricket with old boys?'

Philip was pleased at this, and presently both children had settled down into a happy chat about the new life opening before them. It had done them both good, that discovery of the two kinds of cleverness; it made Philip more humble, and opened his eyes to the real value of his unselfish, obliging sister, and it had cheered and comforted poor, ignorant, little Rose. In his secret heart Philip knew that Rose had the

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best sort of cleverness, such as no books and no teaching, except God's, can give, and he made a sort of resolution to try and get some of it himself.

Mr. Elford and Rose went abroad as the doctor suggested, and little Rose became a great traveller, and crossed the wide, blue Mediterranean, and saw Arab boys on donkeys, and wondered at the great high Pyramids, which her father told her might have been built by the poor children of Israel, when they were in the 'house of bondage.' And she learnt to read a little, too, in the pauses of their journeyings, so that she came back to England a wiser child than when she left; but she kept her old cleverness, her loving readiness to do all a little girl can to help those around her, the smiling looks and pleasant words which made her so dear and useful to her sick father.

And Philip improved, too, in the months of his father's absence, had a little conceit knocked out of him in the large school, and found out that many boys younger than he was knew as much as he did, and talked less about it. When they all met again, which was in Philip's Easter holidays, he was nearly as ready as Rose in his attentions to his father, who, though much better, was not yet strong; and, more wonderful than all, he even tried to wait on Rose, seldom laughed at her, and greatly applauded her rather lame attempts at reading 'Robinson Crusoe' aloud in the evenings.

H. A. F.

AN ALPHABET FOR THE CHILDREN.

By Father Christmas.

A is the Anchor of hope in your hearts,
B is my Blessing that never departs;
C is the Christmas I hope you 're enjoying,
D is the Day you 'll find short (well employing).
E is your Eye, be it brown, grey, or blue,
F is the Fun that you love, all of you;
G is the Game that all may take part in,
H is the Hour we 're having a laugh in;
I is the Ice-pond, brilliant as glass,
J is the Jacket, by it spoilt, alas!
K is the Kiss under Mistletoe bough,
L is the Laughter all round me now.
M is the Mince-pie, nice hot or cold,
N are the Nuts, not too hard or too old;
O is the Orange you bought in the town,
P is the Pudding of wondrous renown;
Q is the Quarrel, quite out of our way,
R is the Romping we do in our play.
S is your Sister, so merry and bright,
T are the Tales she will tell you to-night;
U 's the Umbrella which I hope you won't want,
V are the Voices that swell in the chant;
W is my Wish that all may be bright,
X is the Xmas Tree to be lit up to-night;
Y is the Yule-log so cheerily blazing,
Z is a letter of puzzle amazing.

THE POOR BLIND MAN.

SLOWLY down the village street,
With his dog and with his staff,
Listening to your passing feet,
Listening to your merry laugh;
Looking with a vacant eye
In the face he cannot scan,
Feeling all he passes by,
Comes the poor blind man.

Green leaves glisten on the trees,
Pretty flowers grow down below,
But the blind man never sees
Tree, or flower, or sunny glow.
No bright ray for him has shined
Since his weary night began —
Little child, be very kind
To the poor blind man.

Glorious sights by sea and land
You can look on, you can know;
Take him by his withered hand,
Lead him where he wants to go:
Of bright things that meet your sight
Teach him, tell him all you can —
God, who made your eyes so bright,
Loves the poor blind man.

Moral Songs.

NOTICE.

With 'CHATTERBOX,' Part I. for 1871, price 3*d.* now ready, is GIVEN a beautiful Coloured Picture, 'THE RECRUIT.'

'CHATTERBOX' Volume for 1870 is now ready, price 3*s.* and 5*s.*

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The Poor Blind Man.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. II.] FEBRUARY, 1871. [One Penny.

Tiny.

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TINY.

HERE you see our little Tiny,
Just preparing for a treat;
Tiny loves his mistress dearly,
(When she gives him cake to eat.)
For he thinks sponge-cake delightful;
But when dinner-time comes round,
Good plain rice and wholesome biscuit
Far too oft untouched are found.

Tiny's home is very pleasant:
And does Tiny ever think
Of the many little doggies
Who have naught to eat and drink?
Tiny has a mat to sleep on,
But he likes a cushion best;
And sometimes, when no one 's looking,
On the sofa takes his rest.

Would you like that I should tell you
How he always spends the day?
He is wiser than some children
Who pass all their time in play.
Every morning, after breakfast,
When he hears the school-bell's sound,
To the school-room marches Tiny,
In his place he's always found.

On a chair beside his mistress,
With a grave and thoughtful face,
Tiny sits for three long hours,
Never stirring from his place.
If he does not learn a great deal,—
If he is not very wise,—
Yet, I 'm *sure*, for good behaviour
He would carry off the prize.

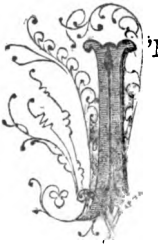
When the big clock on the book-case
Strikes the hour when school is done,
Slates and books are put by quickly;
Tiny thinks this splendid fun;
For he knows that after lessons
Comes the walking or the play:
How he loves a merry scamper
O'er the hills, away, away!

Tiny is not always good, though:
Once upon a rainy day,
When the streets were very crowded,
Naughty Tiny ran away.
Long in tears his mistress sought him,
Sent to seek him far around;
But in vain her anxious questions,
For he nowhere could be found.

Many hours had passed,—when Tiny,
In a very woeful plight,
Wet and tired, crept home slowly;
Oh, it was a mournful sight!
Black with mire, bitten badly,
With his sad eyes full of grief,
Tiny seemed to ask for pardon,
And for all his pains relief.

Now we hope our little Tiny
Never more will run away,
But will live at home contented,
Yet for many and many a day;
And we hope that, growing older,
Though he is not very wise,
Yet, that still, for good behaviour
He will carry off the prize.

GOING TO SCHOOL ALONE.



'M sure I could take Annie to school all by myself,' said little Patrick Cameron; 'mayn't I go alone this morning, auntie?'

But the auntie shook her head; her little nephew and niece had come to stay with her for a whole winter, while their father and mother were in Egypt; and to fill up their time she had found a school where both children could attend for a few hours daily.

Patrick was seven, and Annie five; and he thought himself very old indeed, and quite degraded by being compelled to take a nurse along the two streets and a half which separated his aunt's house from the school. So it was his daily aim to get his aunt to allow him to do without nurse's attendance. I think Master Patrick thought that it was only his short stature and a little want of book-learning which prevented him being a man at once. His father and mother he did look up to and obey; but aunties, nurses, and such-like, he thought very much in the way. But in this matter he was not allowed to triumph; nurse was busy that morning, but a housemaid called Jane was told off to take the children to school. Jane, however, being rather long in putting on her bonnet, Patrick proposed to Annie that they should start without her, and Annie willingly consented.

So they did start, Burton, the old butler, calling to them to wait for Jane, and Jane

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herself hurrying after them a few minutes later. They must have reached the school, however, Jane thought, for she never overtook them; but, wishing to do her duty, she rang the school-bell, and asked the maid if Miss and Master Cameron had arrived. Now a little boy and girl called Miss and Master Popinjay had arrived two minutes before, and the school-servant had mistaken them for the little Camerons, so she told Jane that they were safe in the school-room, and Jane returned to her work quite contented.

But where, meantime, were Patrick and Annie? Being a little early for school, they had followed a very tempting monkey down a side street, and Annie was dancing on the pavement to the music of the barrel-organ, while Patrick was questioning the man as to whether monkeys grew in Egypt, and thinking that he would send a message to his father to catch him one.

Presently they both thought of school, and of Miss Prettyman's face when they came late: so hand in hand they retraced their steps. But somehow the streets had gone wrong; so Patrick told Annie at least; and after turning up first one street and then another, and expecting every moment to find the terrace in which the school was, the unpleasant fact forced itself on Patrick that he must have lost his way. This news he told Annie a little too abruptly, for she sat down on the nearest doorstep and burst into tears.

This would not do, Patrick saw, so he consoled his sister as best he could, and persuaded her that they must be close to Miss Prettyman's, and that they should only miss 'that nasty jogfry-lesson,' so Patrick pronounced geography, and Annie was made to smile again and trot happily along.

Now shops began to line the road, and the children were too much amused to think of school; indeed, it was twelve o'clock, and they began to be hungry.

'Don't cry, Annie,' said Patrick, 'you shall have a bun;' and he took her into a confectioner's shop and ordered a bun in just such a tone as he had heard his aunt do.

It answered quite well,—the children were served, and made a capital lunch off buns and lemonade. They were just leaving the shop, when the young person who served them asked for payment, adding that she thought at first they belonged to that lady there. That lady laughed and said 'No,' and Patrick turned very red. He had never thought of paying; his aunt always did that. Somehow he could not quite manage to be a man, something always went a little wrong. How stupid of him to forget the money, when he had a whole new shilling at home! He began explaining this, and got redder still when every one in the shop laughed, and 'that lady' kissed him, and called him a darling goose, and put sixpence of her own down to pay for him.

How he got out of the shop he did not know, but he did go, for they began asking stupid questions, such as who the children belonged to, why they were by themselves, which annoyed Patrick. Now they wandered on into some shabby streets with dirty children playing about, who would speak to them and call them names. They would shout 'Baccy!' after Patrick, because they thought in his Scotch dress he looked like the figure over the tobacconist's shop. Annie was so tired now that she and Patrick sat down on a doorstep, and then the dirty children crowded round them, and Patrick was asked his name by one ragged boy, who screamed with joy when he heard what it was; but another boy called Patrick a stuck-up Irishman; and Patrick said he was not Irish but Scotch, and then the ragged boy offered to fight him, but Annie cried and said, 'No, no,' and fell off the doorstep into the gutter, which made her very dirty and miserable. Then Patrick accepted an invitation to run a race with a shoeless, half-clothed boy to a distant lamp-post, and losing the race was told it was his boots and jacket which made him run heavy; so he gave them to another boy to hold, and tried to run without, but it ended in his coming back limping to Annie, and finding no boy and no shoes and jacket. Annie was nearly as badly off, for she told Patrick a big girl had taken her jacket, and hat, and gloves to dry, and never brought them back, her

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Patrick.

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Annie.

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boots she had vigorously resisted giving up, as nurse was not there to button them again.

These poor, silly children had wandered into one of those bad parts of London, where even little ones of their own age are taught to be thieves.

Patrick himself began to see something was very wrong, and when Annie began crying for mother, he, too, gulped down a sob, and proposed asking the way to Egypt. Auntie and nurse he felt could hardly console or forgive him in this pit of woe and naughtiness into which he had fallen.

Just at that moment a policeman came down the street and stopped to stare at the little wanderers. Patrick had no fear of policemen; the cry of 'Bobby!' did not scare him as it did the poor little evil-doers of the neighbourhood, though we know he was nearly as naughty as they were to-day. So he did not start when the man in blue laid a hand on his shoulder, and he told his story very simply in answer to his questions.

'Come along to the station with me,' said the policeman.

'Oh, yes, the station for Egypt, please,' said poor Patrick.

Little Annie was so tired she had to be carried, and when, out of the dusk of the twilight streets, they came into the bright light of the police-station, she was found to be asleep. Such a dirty little object, too, Patrick could not believe she was his pretty little sister; and he was no better, either.

He tried to be a man again, and went boldly up to the big inspector and asked for 'a ticket to Egypt,—two, please, and first class;' and he turned very red again when all the policemen laughed great rude laughs, and the inspector took no notice of his request but began asking about Miss Prettyman's, and teazed him to remember the name of his aunt's square, which he said he had never heard, and then that he had quite forgotten.

Altogether it was a hopeless affair, and the inspector said he must go to work in a different way. And then some one brought them bread and milk, and then Patrick remembered no more till a great light shone in his face, and he woke up to find himself held under a flaring gas-lamp, while, oddly enough, the big policeman had in his hand his own photograph, Scotch dress and all. And some one else was comparing Annie with her photograph, in her best frock, and with her favourite doll.

'It's all right, Kensington Park South, No. 15. Call a cab, Bill, and take these children off; here, get a coat for the little one, and look sharp, some one's in a taking about them.'

It was midnight when auntie took her two half-naked truants into her arms and cried so; she could not scold them. When Patrick saw her tears, he cried too, and said he was so sorry; and then nurse cried, and said, 'to think her lambs should ever come to this.' And half-crowns went to the policemen, who touched their big hats, and said, 'It was always best to send the "Cartes" round, parties could generally be found in that way;' and Patrick thought it odd that policemen should go to parties in carts, and put it by as a question to be asked his father when he came back from Egypt.

Patrick hardly thought himself such a man after this strange day,—in fact, for a good while he was so gentle and obedient, even to nurse and Jane, that nurse was heard to say she did hope her dear young gentleman was not going to be ill, she could not understand the change. And if ever Patrick is the least inclined to be wilful, or to think himself wiser than his elders, auntie has only to say, 'Remember the day you went to school alone,' and he is quite good again. H. A. F.

YOUR PULSE.

MY child, feel your pulse. If it stops you die. God keeps it in motion. Put your finger there every morning before you pray. Think how God has kept it going.

Your pulse is the clock of your life—
It shows how your minutes are flying—
It marks the departure of time,
And tells you how fast you are dying.

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DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

RACHEL.

AGAIN our picture shows us a scene near Haran in Mesopotamia (or Padan-Aram, as that part of the country was often called), and again it represents something which happened at a well; but nearly a hundred years have passed away between the two scenes, and the maiden in this picture is Rebekah's niece, Rachel.

Here, instead of Abraham's servant, with his attendants, and camels, and treasures, we see Rebekah's son Jacob, who had come a lonely wanderer from Canaan in the hope of finding refuge with his kindred at Haran. How he had deceived his blind and aged father; how Rebekah had helped his deceit, and how he had been obliged to flee from his angry brother, we read in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of Genesis.

At Haran, where Rebekah and her brothers had dwelt in their youth, Laban still lived, with his two daughters, Leah and Rachel. His house could not be a very happy home for a young damsel, because he and Leah were deceitful in character, and we know that where the members of a family are untruthful to one another, there true happiness cannot be found.

Rachel, the younger daughter, was very beautiful, and seems to have been an industrious, amiable, and gentle maiden. Although she was the child of a rich man, who had many servants to do his bidding, yet, according to the custom of the time, she was employed as the shepherdess of one of her father's flocks.

One day, when the scorching sun was high in the heavens, Rachel led her sheep as usual to the well, where a toilsome but important part of her work had to be done. It was one of those wells which the owners used to keep closed by means of a large stone, so heavy that only a strong man could move it away. The use of this stone was to prevent the scarce and precious water beneath from being spoiled by the flying dust, or dried up by the heat of the sun, or used by people who had no right to take it. Rachel had generally been obliged to wait till one of the shepherds removed the stone for her, and even then the rough men would often keep her still longer in the heat while they gave water to the sheep of their own flocks. But on this occasion a stranger, who was talking to the shepherds, came forward as soon as Rachel went to the well, and not only did he roll away the stone, but he also drew the water and poured it into the trough ready for her sheep to drink.

She little thought that the stranger was her cousin Jacob, but he knew her, because when he had asked the shepherds about Laban they had said, *Behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep* (Gen. xxx. 6).

After the custom of the time, Jacob kissed the maiden, as a sign of his respect and affection for so near a relation, and then he *lifted up his voice and wept* for joy that he had found his mother's kindred, and for gratitude to God who had guided and prospered his journey. *Then Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother*, that is, his near relative; *and she ran and told her father*, who came and kissed Jacob, and took him to their home.

Before Jacob had been there a month he loved Rachel most truly, and he resolved that she should be his wife. So, instead of asking for wages in payment for his services to Laban, he said, *I will serve thee seven years for Rachel, thy younger daughter.* As Laban readily agreed to the proposal, Jacob lived with him and laboured for him all the seven years, *and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her.*

No doubt Rachel often shared his labours, and no doubt he often cheered himself by telling her of the time when she should accompany him to Canaan, where he was to inherit Isaac's birthright, with all its precious blessings. But when at the seven years' end he claimed his wife, Laban most shamefully deceived him by giving him, not Rachel, but her elder sister instead. This it was easy for the crafty father to do, because in Eastern weddings

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Rachel.

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Father's Return Home.

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the bride has a thick veil over her face when she is taken to her husband's house.

Jacob knew that it was his duty not to desert Leah, but at the same time he was determined to marry his beloved Rachel; so as there was at that time no *plain* law of God that a man should have but one wife, he supposed that it would be right for him to have both for his wives. After the faithless Laban had received another seven years' service from his nephew, Rachel was allowed to become Jacob's wife.

We have seen how greatly Jacob's love for Rachel brightened his life of toil and exile from home. How much more if we love God with all our hearts, which is the only *true* way of loving Him, shall we find even our weariest and saddest hours cheered by the light of His presence, Who has said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee* (Heb. xiii. 5).

FATHER'S RETURN HOME.

RAINDROPS patter,
Hailstones clatter,
Round the cottage sweeps the gale;
Raging, moaning,
Blustering, groaning,
Now a roar and now a wail.

Dripping, dreary,
Shivering, weary,
Father comes in from the gloom;
Brightly glowing,
Welcome throwing,
Shines the fire-light through the room.

Savoury smelling,
Through the dwelling,
Browns the oatcake in the pan;
Mother bakes it,
Turns it, shakes it,
For the hungry, tired man.

Blue eyes beaming,
White teeth gleaming,
Peeps the youngest from his cot;
Little Lizzy,
Blithe and busy,
Makes the porridge thick and hot.

These are pleasures,
These are treasures,
Wealth and power may fail to bring;
Radiance casting,
Pure and lasting,
Joys from honest toil that spring.

Children's Songs.

SYBILLA'S RESOLUTION.

'WELL, Sybie, what is it?' asked Miss Hargreave of her little cousin Sybilla.

They were sitting under the chestnut-trees at the bottom of the garden; Sybilla had been reading the story of the martyrdom of Viva Perpetua, but now the book had fallen from her hand, and the tears stood in her eyes.

'O Cousin Ella,' she cried, 'isn't it grand? But how could she be so firm? I don't think I could, but I should have liked, shouldn't you? But there are no martyrs now-a-days; one can do nothing for Christ now;' and Sybilla looked sadly around her, whilst her tone would have led one to suppose that she felt herself injured at having been born in an age that did not require her to prove her faith at the stake or the rack.

'Do you think so, Sybie?' asked Miss Hargreave quietly.

'Why, what can we? It is not a disgrace in these times to be called a Christian; indeed, I think anybody would be very angry to be called anything else.'

'That is true, Sybie; but though we are no longer called upon to die for our faith, we are bound to live for it, and, having taken Christ's name upon us, to fashion our lives after the pattern which He has given us.'

'I should like to be good.'

'Well, Sybie dear, and I should like you to be good, and——'

'Do look at Lucy, Cousin Ella, how she is pulling Rough about! I won't allow it!' and before Miss Hargreave could speak, Sybilla had risen and darted across the lawn to where her younger sister was playing with a Skye-terrier.

'Now, is Rough my dog, or is he yours? and how many times am I to say that I won't have things tied to him?' cried Sybilla, angrily snatching at the dog, and giving her sister a push that sent her

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rolling on the ground. Lucy began to cry, for she was hurt by the fall, but without taking any notice Sybilla walked back to her seat under the chestnuts carrying Rough in her arms.

'I think you were right, Sybie, in saying you could not have been a martyr,' said Miss Hargreave quietly, as Sybilla sat down.

'Why, Cousin Ella?' Sybilla asked quickly, looking round at Ella.

'Because a martyr must be prepared to suffer and be kind, to be gentle and forgiving even when provoked, and that, it seems, you are not.'

'But, Cousin Ella, it is very wrong, and cruel too, of Lucy to tie things to Rough; and I have told her not to many a time.'

'But, Sybil, does Lucy's doing wrong excuse your doing so? and which is worse, to tie a handkerchief to the dog, or to throw your sister on the ground? And is that the way to show the gentle, Christ-like spirit you were wishing for?'

Sybilla hung down her head; she did honestly wish to be good, but hitherto she had never got beyond wishing; to turn her wishes into actions had, somehow, not occurred to her until lately. But this was exactly what Cousin Ella was trying hard to lead the little girl to do. Sybil, though hot-tempered, had a warm, generous nature, and though, from her mother's constant ill-health, which hindered her from watching over her children, Sybilla had grown very self-willed and headstrong, she was ready to receive good teaching. This Miss Hargreave quickly perceived, and, now that she was going to stay with them some time, had determined to do her best to help her little cousin to overcome her failings. With that purpose she spoke seriously to her now,—

'Sybil, can you repeat the verse you said to me this morning, or have you forgotten it?'

'"Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another,"' Sybil repeated.

'And do you think that was only written for you to say as a lesson, Sybie, or as a rule to live by?'

'I suppose as a rule to live by.'

'Well?' asked Miss Hargreave.

'I don't know what you mean, Cousin Ella!'

'Do you really wish to lead the Christ-like life, or were your words a few minutes ago but an idle, empty wish?'

'Why, Cousin Ella, of course. But what do you wish me to do?'

'If Christ were here, what do you think He would bid you do?'

'I don't know.'

'I think He would say, as once before, "First be reconciled with thy brother," or, in your case, sister.'

'What am I to do?' again asked Sybilla.

'See, you have brought Lucy's handkerchief with you; it is lying on the grass; I think you should take it to her, and ask pardon for having been so rough and rude a few minutes since.' But Sybil was hardly prepared to do that; she was older than Lucy, and thought she had a right to correct her, and said so.

'True, you are older, Sybil, but instead of making that an excuse for ill behaviour, it should be a reason for gentleness and forbearance with her, and for your setting her an example of humility and self-forgetfulness, such as she will learn from nobody so well as from you.'

But Sybilla still hesitated, and her cousin did not press her further; after a pause, however, the little girl spoke,—

'Lucy will be all right now, and she wouldn't care for my asking her pardon.'

But as Miss Hargreave made no reply, Sybil asked,—

'Why don't you speak, Cousin Ella?'

'I have told you, dear, what I think you ought to do; I can say nothing further. It is for yourself to decide what you will do. It was yourself, not I, who proposed your striving to become a true follower of Christ.'

'Well, I'll go,' said Sybilla, after a pause, and in such a tone as made her cousin wonder *how* the act would be done, but she moved towards the house quickly. She went into the nursery, where Lucy was playing with the baby.

'Lucy, here's your handkerchief; I didn't mean to hurt you a short time since.'

'But you did hurt me, and I wish you'd go away,' said Lucy.

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'Well, I ask your pardon; will you be friends?'

Lucy did not feel very friendly at the moment, but she was a good-natured child, and, moreover, accustomed to be ruled by Sybilla; so when her sister begged for pardon, she would not withhold it, but held up her face to 'kiss and be friends.'

Then, feeling quite as if she had won a victory, Sybilla ran back to her cousin to tell of her success.

'And it wasn't half so hard as I thought it would be. Now I shall try to be good always; do you think I can?'

'You know who will help you if you ask Him; and with His help you will be sure to succeed in the end,' said Miss Hargreave.

'Yes,' said Sybilla, reverently: and she was silent for some time, then she said, 'To-morrow is Lucy's birthday, you know, Ella; I shall try to be very good. I'll not vex her all day; she shall do just as she likes. Do you think she will be pleased with the work-bag I am going to give her?'

'I have no doubt she will; and I am sure that, if you can keep to your plan of giving up your own will, and putting her pleasure before your own, you will make both her and yourself happy. I must go to your mother now, so think over what we have said, and may God give you strength to walk in the path you have chosen.'

(*To be continued.*)

A SOFT ANSWER.

'A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.'

WHEN thy heart is sad and heavy,
When thy life is all mis-read,
Give not anger for injustice—
Give a gentle word instead.

When another's heart is hardened,
Say not 'It is naught to me;'
Do thy best to heal the mischief,
Lest the sin should rest on thee.

Never speak in bitter scorning,
Seeking any heart to pain;
As the seed is, so the blossom—
And the curse comes back again.

Sunday at Home.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

NAUGHTY chair to hurt baby! yes, beat it for knocking his head.'

And baby did beat the chair with such downright anger in his little smooth face as would have frightened any one with a little more sense than his mother.

In a few years baby grew up into a fine strong schoolboy; he was baby no longer, but sturdy Benjamin Smith.

One day he came back from school with a swelled face and a black eye.

'What has happened to you now, Ben?' said his mother.

'It was Tom Miles,' said Ben, in a hard tone; 'he laughed at me, and called me the master's pet because I answered best in arithmetic; but I knocked him down for it, and he's a head bigger than me.'

'My Benjamin has such a spirit,' said his mother, admiringly, to a neighbour, 'nothing stops him; he'll be doing himself a mischief some day fighting those big lads.'

But not a single word did Mrs. Smith say to Benjamin of 'bear and forbear,' 'not rendering railing for railing,' and such-like simple words given for our learning. The silly woman was vain of his hasty temper.

When Benjamin was fifteen his father died, and he was taken from school and put to work in a smithy. Here his companions liked him, for Benjamin was a pleasant fellow when his temper was not roused, and hard work seemed to keep it down a little.

For the next three years things went on more peaceably than they had ever done before, when one sad day the whole village was upset by the news that Benjamin Smith had killed his fellow-workman, John Hind, and was taken up for murder.

It was too true; a good deal of 'chaffing' had gone on in the forge of late about Benjamin's going to marry a young girl in the neighbourhood, and Benjamin lost his temper, and threw a bar of iron at the last speaker, saying, 'That will make you hold your tongue perhaps.'

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Benjamin in Prison.

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Benjamin little thought in his blind anger that poor John really would never speak again. But so it was.

Benjamin gave himself up at once to justice, and though not found guilty of wilful murder he was condemned to a long term of imprisonment. Many years later he told his story to a kind lady who visited at the prison, and she it was who told him that perhaps this long and painful punishment was imposed on him not only by his fellow-man as the fit reward of broken laws, but by God to humble and break down his proud and headstrong temper.

Benjamin had indeed much to suffer for his sin, besides the constant feeling that he had caused the death of a fellow-creature; his poor mother sank under the grief caused by her son's crime, and died shortly after his sentence was pronounced. Then, too, he bore part of Cain's punishment, for he never dared to return to his native village after his release from prison; but he wandered about the country, getting work here and there, a silent, heart-broken, but, thank God! a repentant man. How bitterly he lamented the unchecked passions of his youth few might know, save One, the All-merciful and All-forgiving! H. A. F.

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT;

OR, HOW SHALL WE SPEND IT?

(*Concluded from page* 3.)

ONE day, as Nesta was doing her little task of work beside her mother, nurse came in in great distress; tears were in her eyes, and when her mistress asked what was the matter, she could hardly speak for crying.

'The post has brought me such ill news, ma'am,' at last she said; 'my poor sister is dead, and she has left four poor little things behind her.'

'Why, that is sudden news, nurse.'

'Yes, ma'am, it is; and please can you spare me to go and see after them, poor little things, till the funeral?'

'Certainly, nurse, you must go; but are they in distress?'

'Well, ma'am, I'm sorry to say they are bad enough off, for their father is a gardener, and, being winter-time, he's out of work; but, thank God! I've laid by a little, and it's theirs, poor things, and welcome; at least, it'll help buy them a bit of mourning;' and nurse almost smiled as she comforted herself with the thought.

'Thank you, ma'am, for sparing me,' she said; 'I'm sure Miss Nesta and Master Hugh will give as little trouble as they can.'

'I will,' said Nesta; 'I'll be as good as gold!'

Mother smiled at this, and said, 'I hope you'll be better than *your* gold, Nesta, for that seems of no use to any one;' and then she turned to nurse and asked kind questions about the poor little orphans.

Nurse said there were two girls and two boys, and she told how much she wished to get the youngest into an asylum; 'For you see, ma'am,' she said, 'the others can perhaps earn a little to help their father; but he is only four years old, and such a poor, sickly little thing, that they must try to get him into an orphan asylum.'

And her mistress promised to give her vote for him at the next election.

Nurse was very grateful, and thanked her again and again. When she had left the room, Nesta asked her mother what a *vote* was, and what good it could do the poor boy; and her mother explained that she subscribed one guinea every year to the Infant Orphan Asylum, where little children were taken care of, and taught useful things, and because she paid this money she had a right to a '*vote*' at the elections. Then she explained to her little daughter that there were many more little children left orphans than the Asylum could hold, only seven or eight could be taken in every six months, and they were chosen or *elected*, according to the number of *votes* they had from subscribers; 'And fortunately,' she added, 'I have not yet promised my vote, although the election is on the second of January; so I will gladly give it to nurse's little nephew.'

'Cannot you have a vote for less than a guinea?' asked Nesta, anxiously.

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'No, dear.'

'Do you think he will get in if you give him your vote?'

'I cannot tell, my darling; I shall try and collect as many as I can for him, and, perhaps, if he misses this time, he may get in at Midsummer.'

The children missed nurse very much, they did not like the housemaid so well; Nesta said that she pulled her hair when she curled it, and Hugh said she treated him like a girl; so they were very glad when nurse came back. She was in black now, and had many sad tales to tell them about the little orphans. She told them that the three elder ones had found work in a paper-mill, but that they were very anxious for the youngest to get into the Asylum.

'But there is very little chance for him this time,' said nurse, shaking her head, 'although many kind ladies have promised their votes for him. But I hardly think he will live till summer without better care and food than he has at home.'

'Hugh,' said Nesta, as they were out for their walk, trundling her hoop alongside of Hugh's, 'I want to speak to you. I've thought of a way to spend our present.'

'I don't want to spend it,' said Hugh.

'Oh, but, Hughie, this is such a good way, I think you would like it.'

'What way?'

'Why, I thought how good it would be if we could buy a vote between us, and help poor little Joe into the Asylum.'

'You silly!' cried Hugh; 'I shan't; I shall keep mine and put it in the bank.'

'But, Hughie, just think; nurse says he is so delicate that he won't live at home, and I would so like to help him get in.'

'One vote won't make a difference,' said Hugh, crossly.

'Mother said it would: if he only gets one more than the others he will get in.'

'Well,' said Hugh, 'I don't see why he should get in more than the others.'

'No,' said his little sister with wisdom, 'no; but we know about him, and it would seem right to help him.'

Hugh was very gruff all the way home, and wouldn't answer her at all. When he got home he went straight to his money-box and looked in, there lay the bright gold piece. No, he thought, I can't part with it, I *must* keep it, and he went away and said nothing.

Meanwhile, Nesta felt that the time for the election was coming nearer and nearer. Now there was only a week, she thought she would ask her mother to put some more to her money and buy another vote, but that seemed unkind to Hugh: so she took her money to nurse and asked her to spend it for little Joe. This nurse refused to do; so at last she thought she would try once more; so she went up to Hugh and said, 'Hughie, I wish you would help me buy a vote for little Joe;' and, to her surprise, Hugh put the golden piece into her hand, and whispered,—

'There it is, Nesta; I could not be happy to keep it: use it as you like.'

Nesta could only kiss him, she was so pleased. Hand in hand they went to their mother and asked her, 'Please buy a vote for Joe.'

'Dear children,' said their mother, 'I trusted to your own hearts to teach you how to spend your Christmas gift, but you know Who put the good thought into your hearts. Ask God to bless and accept this offering for one of "His little ones."'

A week had gone by, and Hugh and Nesta sat by the dining-room fire in eager expectation of their mother's return from the election.

'There are the wheels!' said Hugh, starting up! 'Oh, I *do* hope Joe is in.'

'Well, mother?' asked both, breathlessly, as she entered.

'Well,' said the mother, with her kindest smile, 'little Joe is safely in. He had *one* vote more than the others. Do you think it was yours?'

The children were too happy to say much. The thought that little Joe was warmly housed was sweeter than any toy could have been, brighter than any gold piece hoarded up. What a happy feeling came over the young hearts when, in their evening chapter, they came to the words, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto *the least* of these, my brethren, ye did it unto *me*.'

Little reader, do you think these children made a happy and a wise use of their money? I do.

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'Nurse came in in great distress.'

☞ **NOTICE.—With 'CHATTERBOX,' Part I. for January, 1871, is given a beautiful Coloured Picture, 'THE RECRUIT.'**

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. III.] MARCH, 1871. [One Penny.

She has one little face,
Full of sweetness and grace.'

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A MOTHER'S SONG.

'WHAT my baby is like,' do you wish me to write?
A darling, a beauty, my baby is quite.
She has one little face,
Full of sweetness and grace,
And one little head besides;
Two pink little cheeks for her father to kiss.
Indeed and indeed she 's a sweet little miss!

'What my baby is like,' do you wish me to write?
She 's fat and she 's smooth, and she 's soft and white.
With a sweet little nose
To smell at a rose;
Two rosy-red cheeks between;
One little ear on each side of her head—
So baby can hear every word that is said.

My dear little baby sits smiling on me,
She has two little blue eyes with which she can see;
Two pretty eyes,
With which baby cries,
When anything happens to vex her.
With her two pretty eyes my baby 'goes sleep,'
With her two pretty eyes she plays at 'bo-peep.'

Dear darling baby, I love her so well!
How much I love her, no words can tell.
Dearl ittle curls
Has this sweetest of girls,
Though I love her without them as much.
She wears a blue sash to make her look smart,
Though her own sweet prettiness wins each heart.

There 's one little tongue, for my baby to talk,
And two little feet, for my baby to walk—
Two little feet
To trot down the street,
And two little shoes as well;
Two little shoes, and two little socks,
And a pretty red jacket to wear with her frocks.

One little mouth, and ten little teeth,
Six up above and four beneath.
She calls out 'Papa,'
And she calls out 'Mamma,'
That 's all that my baby can say.
Dear little mouth, we must teach it to talk;
Dear little feet, we must teach them to walk.

Does any one want my sweet baby to see?
If you want to see baby, why come and see me!
For baby and I,
When we part, often cry:
At least baby does, if I don't.
So here I have sent you a picture of baby,
And surely you'll say 'She's a smart little lady.'

And now, would you know what is baby's dear name?
To guess it will make you a capital game.
Is it Ann or Amelia,
Or Julia Cordelia,
Florence, or Edith, or Emma?
Is it Amy or Jænie, or May or Matilda,
Caroline, Katherine, Rosa, or Hilda?

Agnes or Agatha, Bertha, Paulina,
Eva or Marion, Lucy Marina,
Louisa, Augusta,
Theresa, or Justa,
Elizabeth, Alice, or Mary?
Take each pretty name that you hear or you see,
Yet sweeter than all is my baby's to me!

J. E. C. F.

SYBILLA'S RESOLUTION.

(*Continued from page* 28.)

CHAPTER II.

SYBILLA woke early next morning with a feeling that something, she could not quite make out what, had happened. Then she recollected that it was Lucy's birthday, and the resolve she had made. She jumped out of bed, got the pretty blue silk work-bag she intended as a birthday-gift for her sister, then climbing on to Lucy's bed, she tried to wake her, to give the bag, and wish her many happy returns of the day; but Lucy was sleepy, and could not be made to understand at once the state of things, and she answered crossly,—

'I wish you 'd let me alone, Sybie; nurse will call me when it is time to get up.'

Sybilla was just going to reply angrily, but she remembered in time, and, though feeling much disappointed, she kept herself from speaking, and got quietly back into bed; and when, a short time after, Lucy woke up, and expressed herself eager to see her present, Sybie did not answer sullenly, as at first she felt inclined to do, but spoke pleasantly, and showed her delight at Lucy's satisfaction; and Sybilla was quite pleased with herself, for she felt that she had begun the day well, and a good start is by no means to be despised.

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But the day was only begun, and there was time yet for the little girl to keep her new resolution of unselfishness, as she soon found, for when the breakfast things were taken away, Mrs. Hargreave said,—

'I shall want one of you little girls to sort and wind me some worsted.'

'Let Lucy do it,' Sybie was about to say as usual, but glancing across the table she met her Cousin Ella's eye..

'I will do them, mother,' she said pleasantly; and though the job was a long and tiresome one, she did not regret having undertaken it, not even when Lucy's merry shouts, as she played with the baby, came ringing in from the garden; and she felt amply rewarded when Cousin Ella, passing through the room, stroked her hair and said,—

'Well done, Sybie; this is a step in the right path.'

The worsteds being at last sorted, Sybilla went out to join her sister.

'Now, Lucy, let us talk about what we will do this afternoon when our cousins come,' she said.

'Oh, I shall show them my presents; but look here, Sybie, I can't make this fit,' said Lucy, holding up a doll's frock she was making: 'never mind the cousins now, but show me how to make this frock fit.'

'But, Lucy, mother says we may have tea out-of-doors, and only think how pretty it would look if we were to dress the arbour and tea-table with flowers! Come, I will show you how to make the wreaths.'

But Lucy's mind was fully taken up with making her doll's frock, and using her new work-box; she didn't see the use of dressing up the arbour; they never had done so before when her cousins had been coming, and there was no need now. It was her birthday, and not Sybil's, and if she did not care about making a fuss why should her sister?

Cross and angry words were rising to Sybilla's lips; she had been thinking all the morning, whilst her hands were busy with the worsteds, how pleasant it would be to prepare for this little party, and now Lucy would not agree; she liked better to make a stupid doll's frock, that she could do just as well any day—it was very selfish of her! This was Sybil's thought, and it required a great effort to keep it in; but again she restrained herself, and even forced herself to enter into Lucy's difficulty about the fit of the frock.

'Mother said we might go and choose some pieces of stuff out of her drawer when you had finished the worsteds,' said Lucy.

'Oh, let us go now,' answered Sybilla, and away the two went.

They had chosen several pieces, when Lucy happened to draw out a piece of blue silk that Sybilla had wished for for some time past. In a moment she forgot everything but her desire to possess it,—

'Give that to me, Lucy! I asked mother for it ever so long since,' she said.

'If you did, she did not give it to you, and I want it as much as you do.'

'Give it to me this moment, Lucy! I am the eldest, and I will have it.'

'I don't care if you are the eldest, I saw it first, and I shall keep it,' was Lucy's answer.

Sybilla's next proceeding was to give Lucy a sharp slap on her bare shoulders; and probably a battle would have begun, but they were checked at this point by a voice saying sadly,—

'O Sybil!'

'O Cousin Ella! Sybil is so cross and unkind,' said Lucy, with tears in her eyes from the blow she had received; 'and mayn't I have this piece of silk when I got it first?'

Miss Hargreave looked from one to the other of the children—from Lucy, still eager to be confirmed in her possession, to Sybil already ashamed of her conduct; then she said,—

'You may, Lucy, if you think you ought;' but her tone and manner were so grave that Lucy hesitated, looked round, and, seeing Sybil's sad face, gave way, exclaiming,—

'No, I won't! Here, Sybil, you may have it.'

But Sybil was sobbing, with her head laid on the table, and hardly heard the offer Lucy was making.

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Sybilla gave Lucy a slap on her bare shoulders.'

'Here, Sybil, don't cry; tell her, cousin, she can have the silk; I don't care for it;' and Lucy was now as anxious to give it up as she had before been to possess it; but Sybil was too sorry, and too ashamed, to look up.

(To be continued.)

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

GRANDFATHER Graham was a kind, white-headed old gentleman, who had a great many grandchildren, and was very fond of them all. He liked to have them with him, and always invited his younger granddaughters to spend the Easter holidays at his house. There were five of them,—Annie, Nellie, Charlotte, Kate, and Jessie. Annie and Nellie were sisters, also Charlotte and Kate; but little Jessie was the youngest of a large family, and her elder sisters had paid their visit to their grandfather at Christmas.

It was a great treat to these children to meet, for they lived a long way from each other, and they looked forward to the Easter holidays throughout the whole year.

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Mr. Graham lived in an old-fashioned house, with long passages, and deep window-seats, and odd corners, which made delightful places for playing hide-and-seek.

On the last Sunday of their stay, it began to rain very heavily just as the party came home from the morning service. They were not able to go to church in the afternoon. But Aunt Agnes gave them some Sunday books and pictures, and played hymns for them on the organ in the dining-room while they sang, so the time passed quickly and happily. At last she was obliged to leave, and she advised them each to take a book and read quietly till tea-time.

They did so for a while, but first one, then another, grew tired and put down her book, and, at last, Nellie said to one of the others, 'Where is Jessie gone? What a little mouse she is! she slips about so quietly I did not notice her leaving the room.'

'I think I can guess,' replied Kate; 'I have found her several afternoons just about this time in Auntie Agnes' room.'

'What can she be doing there?' inquired Charlotte, who, as the eldest, thought that she had to take care of the rest.

'I cannot make out,' replied Kate; 'when I have asked her, she has always put me off with some joke, or run away, so that I never could get it out of her.'

'Let us all go very quietly and see if she is there,' proposed Charlotte; 'I heard Aunt Agnes go out of the hall-door some time ago, so she is not with her. I hope she is not in mischief.'

The others laughed at the idea of their little pet being in mischief, but enjoying the thought of finding out a secret, they started off on tiptoe to their aunt's room. They opened the door very quietly indeed, and there, curled up in an arm-chair by the side of the bed, sat little Jessie reading a book.

She looked up when they entered, and seemed much surprised as the four came in one after another, and Kate cried, 'There she is; I knew we should find her here.'

'Jessie, what are you doing?' asked Charlotte, severely. 'You have no business here, and meddling with Aunt Agnes' books when she is out too; I did not think you would be so sly.'

'I am not sly, Charlotte,' said Jessie; 'I helped Aunt Agnes to dress to go out, and she told me that I might stay here if I liked.'

'Well, then, what have you been doing?' said Kate. 'Come, you shall tell me this time;' and she put out her hand for the book Jessie was holding.

Jessie gave it to her, saying, 'It is only my little Bible. Is it tea-time? I did not think I had stayed here so long, but I have been wondering how it was the women at the sepulchre were so frightened when they saw the angels, and I was trying to think how I should feel if I were to see one here.'

'O Jessie,' said Annie, 'you should not think such things, people never see angels now-a-days.'

'No,' said Jessie, 'I suppose they do not, but you know there are always angels with us to take care of us, and I often think I should like to see one very much.'

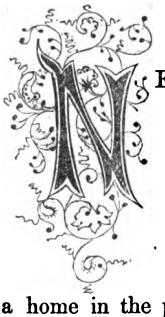
'So should I,' replied Nellie, 'and if they are always taking care of us, I cannot see why we should not be very glad to see them. I am sure they would be kind-looking. Shall we ask Aunt Agnes this evening to let us find all that is said about them in the Bible?'

'Yes,' said Jessie, 'and let us go downstairs and try and find out as much as we can about them ourselves till tea-time.'

And so they did, and the time passed so pleasantly that they were all quite surprised when the tea-bell rang. M. B.

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

MIRIAM.



EARLY all the children who read the *Prize*, will see and know at once that the damsel is Miriam, and that she is watching over her baby-brother, whose tiny ark or boat is soon to be exchanged for a place in his mother's arms, and afterwards for a home in the palace of King Pharaoh's daughter.

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Miriam, though born in Egypt, was not an Egyptian child, but a Hebrew, as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were then called. Both her father Amram and her mother Jochebed were descended from Levi, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Since Joseph's death the Hebrews had become so numerous that the jealous Egyptians feared lest they should rise up and conquer that part of Egypt in which they dwelt. So to keep them down they made the Hebrews slaves, and placed over them cruel taskmasters to beat them with rods to make them work harder.

Miriam's father was one of these poor, ill-used slaves, and, probably, was forced either to toil in the king's brick-yards, or to join with other slaves in dragging along huge blocks of stone for building palaces and temples.

When Miriam was about seven or eight years old, her brother Aaron was born. As the Hebrews still increased greatly in number, the king who reigned at that time gave the cruel order that all the boys who were born in Hebrew families were to be drowned in the river Nile.

Very soon after this dreadful law, and about three years after Aaron's birth, Jochebed had another baby, a boy of wonderful beauty. How sad for Miriam to know that, when an Egyptian officer came in search of new-born Hebrew babes, her brother must be thrown into the river to be drowned! How every strange step at their door must have made her heart beat quick with fear!

For three months the baby was safely hidden in the house; but at length the sad time came when Miriam's mother told her that their darling could no longer be concealed there.

Strange, indeed, must the little maiden have thought her mother's plan for saving him from being drowned, and eagerly must she have watched her mother's fingers weaving the basket-like boat in which he was to be placed. Perhaps Miriam helped to gather the broad bulrushes, which grew near the water's edge, and which Jochebed twisted and wove into a basket with a lid or cover. Having melted some bitumen (called 'slime' in our Bible, Exod. ii.), and added to it some pitch, Jochebed spread the mixture over the plaited rush-basket. When this was quite cold it made a hard, glassy wax, through which no water could find its way, and yet the basket was so light that it would float on the surface of the river.

We may be sure that Miriam soon found how firmly her mother trusted in God to save the baby's life, but it must have been with aching hearts that they both went down to the water-side, carrying the basket with the baby in it, and dreading lest any Egyptian should ask what they were going to do.

When Jochebed had placed the little vessel in a bed of tall rushes that grew in the stream, she left Miriam to keep watch and see what would become of the child.

Little did the damsel suppose how much depended upon her staying there and faithfully watching the spot. Little did she think that her feeble, helpless little charge, the son of a slave, would grow up to be not only the deliverer of the Hebrews from their cruel bondage, but to be also one of the holiest, and mightiest, and most wonderful of men. And little, too, did she think that, because she was this babe's sister, she was one day to become for a time the chief woman in all the twelve tribes of Israel. Knowing nothing of all this, she steadfastly kept watch as her mother had bidden her, until, as we all so often have heard, King Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to bathe.

Seeing the ark or basket-like boat floating among the rushes, she sent one of her maids to fetch it, that she might see what was in it. How thankfully Miriam must have watched the pitying looks with which the princess gazed on the weeping babe! How joyfully she must have listened to the gentle tone in which she exclaimed, '*This is one of the Hebrews' children!*' And how quickly she must have come forth from her hiding-place, to say to the princess, '*Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?*' And when this eager request was granted, how speedily she must have hastened home to tell her mother the glad news!

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The Finding of Moses.

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The Rooks.

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Surely, when night came and the baby was once more asleep in his mother's arms, being nursed and taken care of for the princess, there was not in all the land of Egypt a damsel so happy and so thankful as Miriam. Her brother's new name, Moses, meaning 'drawn out of water,' must often in after years have reminded her of the time when she watched anxiously by the river-side, and all through her long life she must have been thankful that the duty set her by her mother, but also most surely appointed for her by God Himself, had been so faithfully done.

Parents or teachers may decide for us what we have to do, but if we do it to the very best of our power, however lowly a task it may be, we are pleasing the great God Himself, and helping to work out His most holy will.

The task Thy wisdom hath assigned
Oh, let us cheerfully fulfil;
In all our works Thy presence find,
And prove Thy good and perfect will.

THE ROOKS.

THE Rooks are building on the trees;
They build there every spring:
'Caw, caw,' is all they say,
For none of them can sing.

They 're up before the break of day,
And up till late at night;
For they must labour busily
As long as it is light.

And many a crooked stick they bring,
And many a slender twig,
And many a tuft of moss, until
Their nests are round and big.

'Caw, caw.' Oh, what a noise
They make in rainy weather!
Good children always speak by turns,
But Rooks all talk together.

How many nests are on the trees,
And up at what a height!
There are a thousand Rooks, and yet
I never saw them fight;

For they are friendly birds, and each
Is to his neighbours known:
They never touch each other's things,
But let them all alone.

I wonder if we ever heard
Of little girls and boys
Who quarrelled more than Rooks, and made
A more unpleasant noise?

I wonder if we ever heard
Of children who would touch
The things they ought to let alone—
I wonder very much.

Aunt Effie's Rhymes.

JACOB AND ANNA.

From the German.

JACOB and Anna were once alone in the house; Jacob said to Anna,—

'Come, let us look for something good to eat, and gobble it up; that will be good fun, won't it?'

Anna said, 'Very well, take me to a place where no one can see us, and then I don't mind.'

'Come along then to the dairy,' said Jacob, 'and we will drink up a whole bowl of nice rich cream.'

'Ah! but,' said Anna, 'the neighbour will see us there; see, he is cutting wood in the street.'

'Come then into the kitchen,' said Jacob; 'there is a great jar of honey in the cupboard, and we will dip our bread in it.'

'No, no,' said Anna; 'they can see us then from the house opposite; look, some one is sitting at the window and spinning.'

'Then let us go to the cellar, and eat apples,' said Jacob; 'it is pitch-dark there, no one can possibly see us.'

'But,' Anna said, 'O dear Jacob, do you really think no one can see us there? Have you forgotten about God, Who can see everywhere?'

Then Jacob looked afraid and sorry, and he said,—

'You are quite right, Anna, I forgot about God: yes; He can see us everywhere, even in the dark. Let us do nothing naughty because of Him.'

Anna was glad that Jacob took her words to heart; she ran and fetched a little card for him, on which was written these words,—

'Give me, Lord, a holy fear,
Of Thy watchful eye;
Keep me pure from every sin,
Guard me till I die.'

H.A.F.

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JESSIE CLARE.

'I WISH our Jess were sharper, wife,
I can't make that child out;
She never seems like other girls
To run and play about.'

'Jess has no sense,' the wife replied,
'She's nothing of a head;
She cannot do a single thing,
Not even bake the bread.'

'Why Anne and Meg are handier,
Though not so old as she;
I often think she 's more a plague
Than any help to me.'

For Jessie Clare was far from bright
She could not quickly learn,
And often made her mother say,
Her bread she 'd never earn.

Yet Jessie had a tender heart,
And prized a loving word;
Though little else than grumbling tones
At home she ever heard.

But some there were who loved her well,
To whom she often came;
The sick she 'd tend with childish care,
And try to soothe their pain.

Though clothes and money she had none
That she could give away,
The poor she 'd do her best to help,
Whilst others were at play.

She 'd nurse a baby tenderly,
(Herself but twelve years old),
Or run on any messages,
Either in rain or cold.

'God bless that little Jessie Clare,'
Old Martha Jones would say;
'My rheumatis seems always worse
When she is gone away.'

Poor little Tom, the carrier's child,
Who crippled helpless lay,
Watched longingly for Jessie's step,
Which surely came each day.

So thus the little quiet maid
Found herself work to do,
Despised although she was at home,
And known to very few.

Yet earnestly poor Jessie longed
To please her parents more;
By one kind look or word of theirs,
She set the greatest store.

And often she would pray to God
She might more clever grow;
For then her parents might, perhaps,
More love and kindness show.

The family of whom I write,
Lived near a village small;
Not far from Sheffield's noise and smoke
And dingy chimneys tall.

The younger children, Jane and Meg,
Were quick and full of fun;
Then there was Dick, the baby boy,
And Jess, the eldest one.

One Sunday evening, after church,
A neighbour came, and said,
'I 've just been told that little Jack,
May Brewster's child, is dead.

'And there 's the poor thing all alone,
Breaking her heart outright,
Nobody near to comfort her,
Or cheer her through the night.'

'I 'll go at once,' said Mrs. Clare,
'And stay till morning's dawn;
I can get back to milk the cows
Quite in the early morn.

'Now Anne and Meg you both must try,
How useful you can be;
Look to your father's supper, girls,
See that he don't miss me.'

Then Jessie spoke, 'Please, mother, give
Something for me to do?
I should so like, with Anne and Meg,
To try and help you too.'

''Twould be no use,' her mother said,
'Most things too hard you 'd find;
The only help that you can give
Is Dicky well to mind.'

Then Jessie thought within herself,
'My mother now shall see,
That, though I am a stupid girl,
She may put *trust* in me.'

She fed her brother carefully,
Then laid him down to sleep;
Her sisters laughed because they saw
How close to him she 'd keep.

'Twas getting late, when suddenly
They heard a thundering rap;
Amazed they stared, for seldom came
The neighbours late as that!

'Who's there?' the blacksmith cried aloud,
'What want you, friend, with me?'
And, going to the cottage door,
He opened it to see.

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'I 've run in haste,' the man exclaimed
(His name was Jacob Green);
'A crack near the great reservoir,
They say, to-day was seen.

'All hands are being called to aid,
Because it larger grows;
For, if the water bursts its bounds,
The danger, heaven knows!'

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'Oh, father,' cried the frightened girls,
'Dear father, do not go:
For, if the water rushes out,
You may be drowned, you know.'

'Nay, lassies, nay,' their father said,
And at their terror smiled;
'No cause for fear, I 'll soon come back,
And, Jessie, mind the child!'

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Then off he ran, the children haste
To lock and bolt the door;
And creeping close together wish
Their lonely time was o'er.

The night dragged on, and still they sat
Watching the clock in vain,
Hoping that father soon would come,
But father never came!

Now to the door in breathless state,
With frightened air and mien,
There flew a girl they all knew well,
Daughter of Jacob Green.

'Be quick! no time to lose,' she cried,
'Father has sent to say,
They cannot keep the water in,
Soon it will break away.'

'And we must to the village run,
And climb the hill that's near,
Then, if the waters do escape,
There's not much cause for fear.'

With beating hearts the children heard,
Then answered Meg and Anne,
'Yes, let us to the village fly,
As quickly as we can.'

They seized their hats, nor gave a thought
To Dicky's helpless state;
But called to Jessie to be quick,
Lest they should be too late.

'Don't wait for me,' their sister said,
'For I must Dicky take;
And, if I lift him gently up,
Perhaps he will not wake.'

So off the three girls quickly ran,
Not one with Jessie stayed;
Who, kneeling down, with simple faith,
For Dicky's safety prayed.

She softly raised the sleeping babe,
And wrapped him up with care;
Then took him in her arms, and stepped
Into the chill night air.

But little Jessie's arms were weak,
Not equal to their load,
Do what she would, she could not make
Much haste upon her road.

Still on and on she bravely pressed,
And ever in her heart
The thought arose, 'Will mother say,
I well have done my part?'

Close by the path she had to go,
Uprose a lofty mound;
And on its summit stood an oak,
Alone upon the ground.

The tree had weathered many a storm
That on its trunk had beat;
High up on which the branches formed
A safe and easy seat.

Jessie had almost reached this spot,
When on the wind there came
The distant sound of piercing shrieks,
Of terror or of pain.

With Dicky closer to her breast,
Onward she trembling ran;
And up the green mound's grassy side,
To climb she quick began.

And, when the summit she had gained,
The bright moon lent its light;
To show her terror-stricken eyes
A sad and fearful sight!

A mighty torrent swept along,
Like to a raging sea;
The water from the reservoir,
Whose banks had set it free.

Ruin and death it left behind,
Whilst madly rushing on,
Washing down houses, churches, trees,
And mills, however strong.

As Jessie gazed, the thought arose,
That if she too were drowned,
Yet constant to her parents' trust
In death she must be found.

She trembled at the dreadful fate
That seemed to wait her there;
But that the baby might be saved
Was still her earnest prayer.

But nearer, louder, rushed the flood,
No time had she to spare;
So, running to the oak, she thought
To place her brother there.

I've said the seat by branches framed
Was some way from the ground;
If she could lay the child within,
She hoped he'd not be drowned.

A bench stood underneath the tree,
On this the brave girl got;
And though her strength was nearly spent
Her courage faltered not.

The waters came around the mound,
Less wild, but rising fast;
One effort more! She raised the babe,
And placed him high at last.

'Mother! I've done my best,' she cried,
Then sank upon the ground,
And there next day at morning's dawn,
Her lifeless form was found.

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The water had not touched the boy,
It scarcely covered *her;*
But, fainting from the loss of breath,
She had not strength to stir.

The rest were saved, and bitterly
Her parents still deplore,
That, whilst poor Jessie was alive,
They did not prize her more.

Parents, a lesson learn from this,
And if a child is slow,
Be patient, and remember too,
'Twas God who made it so.

THE BOY THAT GREW TO BE A GENTLEMAN.

'YOU see I am a gentleman!' said Will Thompson, 'I will not take an insult.' And the little fellow strutted up and down in a rage. He had been throwing stones at Peter Jones, and he thought that his anger proved him to be a gentleman.

'If you wish to be a gentleman, I should think you would be a *gentle* boy first,' said his teacher. 'Gentlemen do not throw stones at their neighbours. Peter Jones did not throw stones at you, and I think he is much more likely to prove a gentleman than you are.'

'But he 's got patches on his knees,' said Will.

'Bad clothes don't keep a boy from being a gentleman,' said the teacher, 'but a bad temper does. Now, William, if you wish to be a gentleman, you must be a gentle boy.'

A little further on the teacher met little Peter Jones. Some stones had hit him, and he was hurt by them.

'Well, Peter, what was the matter between you and Will this morning?' asked the teacher.

'I was throwing a ball at one of the boys in play, sir, and it missed him and hit Will Thompson's dog.'

'Why did you not throw back?'

'Because, sir, my mother says to be a gentleman I must be a gentle boy, and I thought it was best to keep out of his way till he had cooled a little.'

The teacher walked on, praising Peter's conduct, but kept the boys in his mind, and he lived to see Will Thompson a poor outcast, and Peter Jones a gentleman, loved and respected by all.

Remember, then, children, that it takes *a gentle boy to make a gentleman.*

MY PUSSY.

WHO likes into my lap to leap,
To curl her tail round and there sleep,
Or near my feet to mew and creep?
My Pussy.

Who climbs my chair? and on my back
Springs without scratching? nor is slack
To reach my head if place she lack?
My Pussy.

Who with my cotton-reel so plays,
That I *must* watch her pretty ways,
And think her mews are thanks for praise?
My Pussy.

Who seems to watch with bright green eyes
When my return from school she spies,
And in my path delighted lies?
My Pussy.

Who licks her paws with dainty care,
As if she liked them clean and fair?
(To me a lesson, I declare!)
My Pussy.

Who watches me when breakfast comes,
And mews to set her milk and crumbs,
Till brother says we 're just like chums?
My Pussy.

And shall I ever treat you ill,
Or give you to rude children's will,
Your kitten-heart with woe to fill?
My Pussy.

Or carelessly forget to feed
When I have had my share indeed,
And ought to know that you have need?
My Pussy.

Oh, no, no, no! and if I turn
To *you*, when I your hunger learn,
Shall I the poor child's pleading spurn?
My Pussy.

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My Pussy.

So, Pussy, though you cannot preach,
Your little mews kind lessons teach,
And seem to move my heart like speech,
My Pussy.

Why shouldn't they? for God doth give
Voices to each and all that live,
And hears too, if we make them grieve!
My Pussy. S. E. M.

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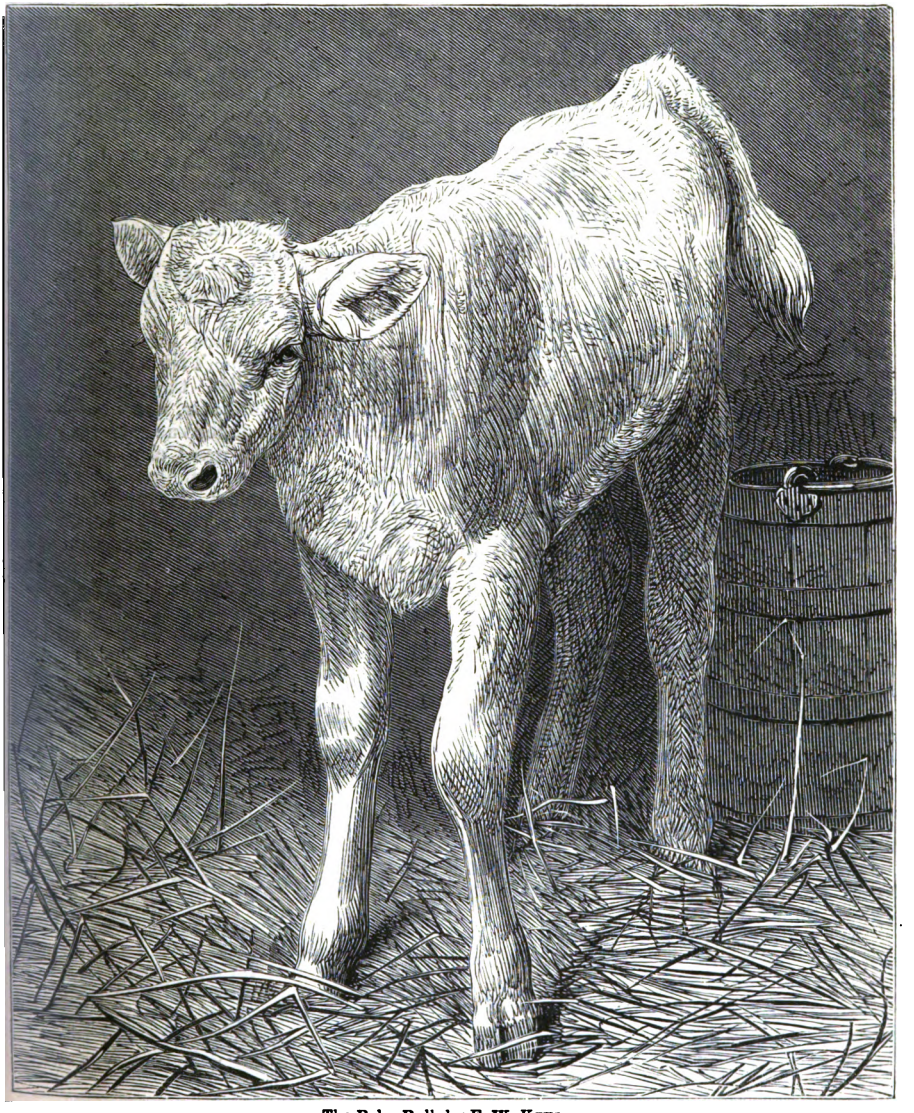
THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IV.] APRIL, 1871. [One Penny.



The Baby Bull, by F. W. KEYL.

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THE BABY BULL.

ONE of the earliest pleasures I can remember was being taken into a cow-shed to see 'the dear little calf.'

A 'proverbial philosopher' has said, that 'a babe in a house is a well-spring of gladness;' and I am sure, that where there are children in a country house, the same might be said of a little calf.

Have you got a calf? was generally our first question, when, as children, we happened to go where cows were kept. I am sorry to say, that hopes that had been raised by the dairymaid's Yes, were often disappointed; for instead of the 'dear yitty talf,' as baby said, it proved to be an animal as big as a donkey, with sprouting horns.

What a difference there is between the soft, almost pulpy-looking feet of a young calf, which by their tottering action gain for it in Ireland the rather cruel name of 'Staggering Bob,' and the strong, muscular legs of the bull! What a difference there is between the mild, harmless, helpless calf, and the easily enraged, full-grown bull. But even the bull by proper training may be turned into a useful farm servant. I have seen one in a team ploughing in company with Sussex oxen; I have seen two harnessed tandem fashion; and I have a sketch of one drawing coals from the railway station at Reigate in Surrey.

The most vicious bull was, at one period of his life, an innocent calf; the thief, and even the murderer, were once innocent babies; and with proper training might have become good men; but either they were unfortunate and had bad homes, or else they did not profit by the good training given them!

We hope our little readers will do credit to the happy homes and kind parents which so many of them have.

NEVER acquiesce in immoral or pernicious opinions.

SYBILLA'S RESOLUTION.

(*Continued from page* 36.)

'I THINK you had better go away, Lucy darling, she will come to you presently,' said Miss Hargreave; and then, as Lucy left the room, she laid her hand on Sybilla's shoulder, saying,—

'Sybil, is this the way to mend wrong doing?'

'Go, away! I know you think me very wicked, and I shall never be any better; it 's no use trying.'

'Poor little Sybil!' said Ella, tenderly, putting her arm round the little girl.

'I have been trying so all the morning, and I did think I was succeeding, and now, only see! I shan't try any more.'

'Nay, surely, Sybil, this is the first failure. Rome, you know, was not built in a day, and we do not become perfect in one effort. But as the great city was raised by the steady, patient piling of one stone on the top of another, so too you must steadily and patiently pile up effort after effort, to get a lowly and gentle nature—making every failure only a reason for greater watchfulness, and a stepping-stone to braver deeds in the future.'

'Do you think I should ever succeed?' Sybil asked, eagerly.

'With God's help I do, Sybil; but you must not forget to ask that, or I fear you will make poor work.'

'Well, I 'll try; I don't know how I shall succeed, but I 'll try.'

'And how will you begin?'

'I suppose I ought to make friends with Lucy.'

'Yes, love, do. See, she has left you the piece of silk you were quarrelling about.'

'But I want her to have it now. I hate the sight of it! I'm sure I don't know what made me forget myself so, and when I had remembered all the morning, and kept myself from being cross.'

'Perhaps, dear, that was the reason; you had done so well that you were

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getting too secure in your own strength, and forgetting to keep so strict a watch. But now, go to Lucy, and when you have made it up with her, come quietly to me in the arbour; I have something to show you.'

Sybil did so, and when she reached the arbour found her cousin busy with a heap of flowers, which she was arranging as Sybil had proposed doing to Lucy.

'Now, Sybie dear, will you help me to work out your plan, so that we may have something pretty to show the cousins when they come?'

You may be sure Sybilla needed no second invitation, but set to work with right good will. It was always a pleasure to her to be with Ella; it was especially so just now, and perhaps, during the whole day, Sybil had no hour so pleasant as the one spent with her cousin in dressing the arbour.

The cousins came in the afternoon, and duly admired the work, whilst Lucy was delighted with it, and told them all that it was Sybie's thought. The day passed very smoothly and pleasantly, for Sybil did not again forget herself; and by her patience and cheerfulness she contrived to keep them all good-tempered and pleased.

'O Sybie! I think this has been the best birthday I have ever had,' said Lucy, as they were going to bed; and Sybilla was well satisfied, for she knew that she had helped much to its enjoyment.

CHAPTER III.

'SYBIL! Where are you, Sybie? Father says he will take us all to-morrow to Leug Abbey — you and me, and Herbert and Constance; and Aunt Harriet is going to take Willie and Mary; won't it be fun?'

'How delightful!' cried Sybil; 'and is Cousin Ella going?'

'I don't know; she says it must depend on how mother is.'

All day the children talked of the coming pleasure; they could think of nothing else, until some one said,—

'But poor Lily, it will be only a dull day for her, for she will have to be left quite alone, whilst the others are enjoying themselves among the ruins.'

'Yes, it is a great misfortune to her to be obliged to lie always on her couch; but she bears it very well on the whole, poor child.' It was Mr. Hargreave who said this.

'Oh, but Lily is used to it now, and does not mind it so much as she did at first,' said Sybilla.

'She must have a sweet, patient disposition, if she doesn't mind having to lie still when her companions are running and jumping about, nor having to stay at home all alone when her brothers and sisters are going for a holiday,' said Ella, looking at Sybilla.

'It is very sad,' said Mr. Hargreave, 'but, since we can do Lily no good, it is of no use to make ourselves unhappy about her.'

But Sybilla was thinking, and asking herself whether it would not be better to give up her share in the promised expedition, and instead, go over and pass the day with her cousin Lilian Grey—Lilian, who would never go to any more pic-nic parties; who, so long as she lived, would never be able to walk about and do as other girls. More keenly than she had ever done before, Sybilla felt how hard her cousin's lot was, and—yes, she would stay from the party; at least, Lily should not spend her day alone, as if nobody cared for her; but Sybil would go and stay with her.

Mr. Hargreave looked much surprised when Sybil told what she was going to do. It was not often Sybil thought of others before herself, and he was glad to see that she could do so, but he would not say anything about it, at least not until the day was over.

So Sybil watched the party off, and then, with a little sigh for the lost pleasure, she put on her bonnet and walked over to the home of her cousin, Lilian Grey.

(Concluded in our next.)

STRIVE TO DO RIGHT.

STRIVE not for what is pleasant here;
Think not what you'd like to do;
Seek only what you *should* do, dear,
That's enough for us below.
Seek only here to know what's *right*,
And do it, dearest, 'with thy might.'

J. E. C. F.

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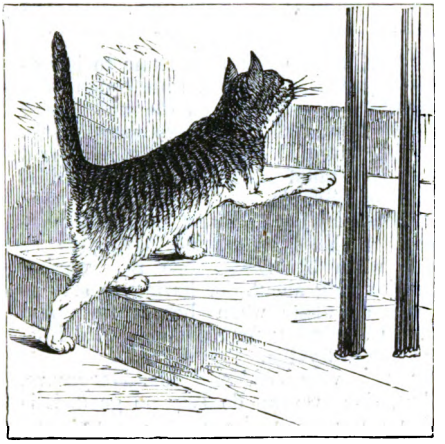
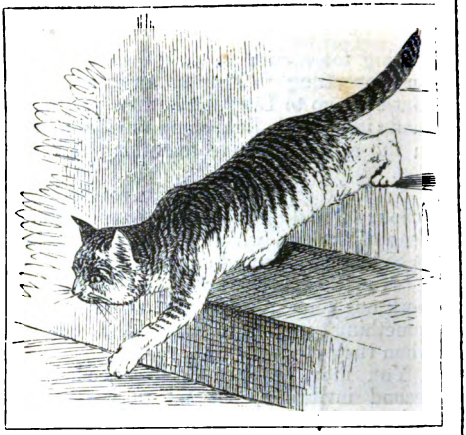
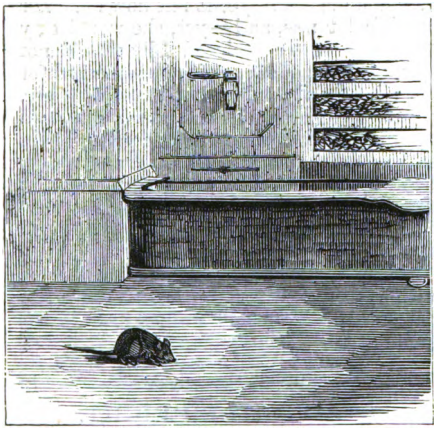


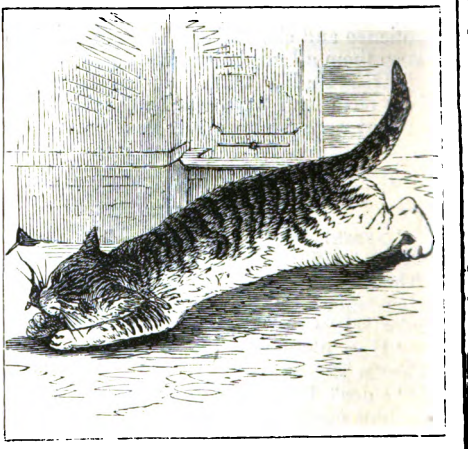


A NURSERY RHYME.

SEE! pussy is looking about for a mouse,
Up-stairs and down-stairs, all over the house;
Into each corner she's poking her nose,
Sniffing and snuffing wherever she goes.
Do leave off, pussy, looking for mice,
And we'll give you something that is quite as nice.

See! pussy is creeping stealthily down,
I'm afraid she'll not let little mousey alone.
Run away, mousey! don't be so slow,
For if pussy gets you she won't let you go.
Why will not puss leave off looking for mice?
'Tis because she thinks there is nothing so nice.





See! mousey is looking about for some cheese
All over the kitchen; she's taking her ease.
Run, run! little mousey! run away fast!
Or the very next moment will be your last.
For pussy will not leave off looking for mice,
Although we have offered her something as nice.

There! pussy has caught the poor little mouse,
She's not looked in vain all over the house.
Little mousey will never find cheese any more,
For pussy will kill, and then eat her, I'm sure.
Oh! fie, pussy! why do you catch little mice?
I'm sure there are plenty of things quite as nice.

M. G. L.

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ETHEL LYNTON.

'CAN I get you anything else before I go, father?' said Ethel Lynton, one Sunday afternoon, as the bells were ringing for service.

Mr. Lynton was lying on the sofa, propped up with pillows, and a little table stood by his side, where Ethel had already placed his medicine, jelly, and a few of his favourite books.

'No, thank you, my darling,' replied her father, 'you are such a good little nurse, that you always know just the right things to get for me. It is quite time to start, my child,' added he, 'I only wish I could go with you.'

'So do I, father, and I hope you will come before long; you have got so much better lately.'

'Good-bye,' said she, nodding to him from the door; 'mind you ring for Ann if you want anything. I have told her to listen for your bell.'

Mrs. Lynton had died when Ethel was only six years old, and from that time she had been her father's constant companion. He was now recovering from a severe illness, and his little girl had waited upon him through the whole of it. Now he could come downstairs. She felt very glad, and began to look forward to the time when he would go to church with her, to thank God for His mercy in making him well again.

It was a bright, peaceful Sunday afternoon, and, as Ethel walked along the road, the birds sang so merrily and the bees hummed so cheerily, as they popped in and out of the flowers, that she could not help

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feeling as if everything was joining her in giving thanks to God for His goodness.

Ethel liked going to church, for she felt that God was very near her there, and she loved Him, and often thought how kind He had been in giving her such a happy home, and letting her learn so much about Himself. She very seldom looked about her during the service, and her clear little voice might always be heard in the responses and singing.

She reached the church in good time, and as she went in several people turned to give her a kind look, for they pitied the little girl who had no companions of her own age, and knew she must have had a sad time while her father was so ill.

Ethel was, however, far too happy to think that any one could pity her, and only thought to herself how delightful it was to live among the people she had known ever since she was a tiny child, and not to be obliged to go among strangers as so many little girls are.

As soon as service was over, she hastened home, so that there might be time for a chat with her father before tea. This was the cosiest hour of the whole day, and, as she sat on her little stool by his sofa, it was hard to say which of the two enjoyed it most.

When the tea was ready you would have been amused to see how carefully she poured out a cup for her father, and how anxious she was to put just the right quantity of cream and sugar, and to butter his toast, and cut it in the sort of pieces he liked.

You may fancy how delighted she was when the doctor said that Mr. Lynton might go out of doors, and what pleasant drives he and his little girl used to have together through the shady lanes.

At last the time came when Ethel had to return to her lessons, which were laid aside during her father's illness. She did not like it so much as waiting upon him, but she was one of those little girls who try to give their minds to whatever they do; and, before long, she found that it was quite possible to enjoy even lessons, especially as she had a kind and patient teacher.

M. B.

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

THE name of the damsel in our picture is not told us in Holy Scripture, and all that we know about her is said in a very few verses of the eleventh chapter of the Book of Judges, where she is spoken of as the daughter of Jephthah. *She was his only child: beside her he had neither son nor daughter.*

The people of Israel were, at that time, in a state of great misery, which they had brought on themselves by their sins. Instead of serving the one true God, Who had brought them out of the land of Egypt and had given them the pleasant land of Canaan to dwell in, many of them worshipped the idols of their ignorant heathen neighbours, and for this God allowed them to be oppressed by the Ammonites, one of the very nations whose idolatry they had copied. Several times before they had sinned in the same way; each time they had been overcome by some powerful enemy, and each time, as soon as they had repented, God had mercifully raised up a powerful deliverer to be their champion and their judge.

So now, when they repented and put away their strange gods and served the Lord, *His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel*, and He put it into the hearts of some of their chief men to seek out Jephthah to be their leader.

Jephthah's daughter knew that her father had been sent for to Mizpeh, a town in the wild, rocky district of Gilead, which was close to the Ammonites; and soon she heard that when they asked him, '*Come and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon,*' he had promised to be their leader in battle on condition that they would afterwards make him their judge. She went to be with him at Mizpeh, and perhaps she knew that there *he uttered all his words before the Lord*, that is, he laid all his difficulties and troubles before the Lord in prayer.

After a while came the parting from him, when, as *the Spirit of the Lord came*

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upon Jephthah, he went with his army to fight against the Ammonites. Very likely the maiden stood upon the heights of Mizpeh, watching his departure and thinking that the hour of his return from victory would be the happiest of her life.

On his way to battle, Jephthah *vowed a vow unto the Lord*, but he uttered it so hastily, and with so little thought of what it might lead to, that, although his words were spoken three thousand years ago, 'Jephthah's rash vow' is a common saying to the present day.

These were the words of his solemn promise to Almighty God: *If Thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering* (Judg. x. 30, 31).

As soon as God had delivered the Ammonites into his hands, Jephthah returned homewards. Eager to welcome her father, his young daughter went out to meet him, with some of her companions, with timbrels and dances, according to the custom of the time; and thus it came to pass that Jephthah's only child was the first who went forth from the doors of his house to meet him. When he saw her he rent his clothes and said, *Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.*

Many a daughter would have bitterly reproached her father when she found what he meant by those terrible words. But she only answered that he must do according to the words which he had spoken to the Lord. To crown such a victory as God had granted to her father, she would give herself to be the sacrifice that he had promised to offer. All she asked was, that for two months she and her companions might be allowed to wander over the mountains of Gilead, and there bewail what she looked upon as the saddest part of her fate—the certainty that she would never have any children, and so never have the honour of being the mother of the promised Messiah.

At the end of two months the brave damsel returned to her father, *who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed.* To make so rash and unholy a vow was a sin; but to fulfil it was even worse than to make it. Jephthah's sacrifice would be abhorred by Almighty God, Who had forbidden the offering up of any human being whatever, but the damsel's giving up herself in obedience to her father's will would be most acceptable to the Lord, Whose Holy Word says, *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord* (Col. iii. 20).

Many learned men have thought that the maiden was not actually offered up as a burnt sacrifice upon an altar, but that she was kept shut up in solitude for the rest of her life. It is to be feared that we cannot thus explain the words, *he did with her according to his vow;* and if Jephthah really did offer her up, we cannot wonder that he only lived six years longer to judge Israel—six years that were made lonely and miserable because he was rash with his mouth, and hasty to utter words of promise to God (Eccles. v. 2). The daughters of Israel felt so much sorrow for the noble-minded damsel that it became a custom for them every year to spend four days in lamenting for the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

As Miriam is an example of being active, trusty, and wise in doing the duty set by a parent to a child, so is this damsel an example of patient submission when the duty is to bear something painful in obedience to the wishes of a parent. This part of obedience is found by most children to be more difficult than doing exactly what they are bid. For instance, to be cheerful and contented when, for good and wise reasons, some wished-for pleasure is denied them, is to many children far harder than to obey a command which bids them to be busy in doing something for their parents.

All will admire the bright example given us by Jephthah's daughter: let all remember, that only by beginning early to submit to her father's will in little matters could she have learned thus to yield up her life in fulfilment of his rash vow.

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'When he saw her he rent his clothes.'

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'Mother, who made them?'

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WHO MADE THEM?

MOTHER, who made the stars which light
The beautiful blue sky?
Who made the moon, so clear and bright,
That rises up so high?'

''Twas God, my child, the glorious One—
He formed them by His power;
He made alike the brilliant sun
And every leaf and flower.

He made your little feet to walk,
Your sparkling eyes to see,
Your busy, prattling tongue to talk,
Your limbs so light and free.

He paints each fragrant flower that glows
With loveliness and bloom;
He gives the violet and the rose
Their beauty and perfume.

Our various wants His hands supply,
And guard us every hour;
We're kept beneath His watchful eye,
And guided by His power.

Then let your little heart, my love,
Its grateful homage pay
To this kind Friend who, from above,
So gently guides your way.'

WILLIE'S FEAST.

And when thou makest a feast call the poor, the lame, the maimed, and the blind.—LUKE, xiv. 13.

'MOTHER, dear,' said Willie, 'you know to-morrow is my birthday, and you always let me invite my friends to dinner and to play with me. But I have been reading that when we make a feast we are to invite "the poor, the lame, the maimed, and the blind," yet I never hear of any one inviting them. If you would let me invite them instead of my school-fellows to-morrow, I should like it so much.'

'Certainly, Willie,' said his mother, 'you shall if you like;' for Mrs. Glanville was delighted to see her little boy take interest in the poor; 'but first tell me whom you would invite.'

'I have been already thinking over those I should like to come,' said Willie. 'There are not very many, and I could not ask the old people because I could not amuse them. There is poor little Harry Langley: his father has been dead a long time, you know, and his mother is only just dead, and they tell me he must go into the workhouse next week; I should like to give him a feast before he goes. Then there is little Mary Howard, who had her leg cut off at the hospital; Fred Preston, who had his arm taken off by the machine; and Agnes Webster, who lost her sight last year by the fever. I have found one of each: one poor, one maimed, one lame, and one blind. If I may go and invite them, dear mother, I should be so pleased.'

Willie's mother gave her consent, and off he ran to give the invitations. He came first to Harry Langley. This boy was staying with a neighbour for a few days—a poor widow who had known his father and mother from childhood; she begged to keep him a short time, until his grief had softened a little, and fed him with her own scanty food. Bread soaked in broth was the best fare he had tasted for a long time. When Willie came to him with his invitation, poor Harry seemed perfectly astonished; he could not believe that he was to go to the 'great house' to a feast prepared by the Squire's son, and the old widow said, she never had heard talk of such a thing in her life before. Willie also promised that Harry should bring the poor old widow a good slice of beef and pudding when he returned. Such things she had not tasted for many a long day, and to think that Master Willie should be so kind as to think of them in their poverty. 'Ah,' said the poor woman, 'that boy is sure to prosper in the world. "Blessed be the man that provideth for the poor and needy, the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble."'

Willie's next journey brought him to the house where Mary Howard lived. This was nearly two miles from the village, but the boy did not mind the walk, for his

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heart was set upon an errand of mercy. It was a fine bright day too, and the walk led him through a most beautiful wood. Now he came into a little narrow path, with the trees on each side; now there was a wide open space where five paths met.

Which path to take he could not tell, and he was already half way through the wood. He stopped and considered a little while, but could not make up his mind, and was really about to turn back, when he suddenly heard a sound amongst the bushes some distance off. It seemed as if some person were moving, then a noise as of a stick being knocked on a board, then a crack, and a girl's voice crying, 'O dear, what shall I do?'

He moved towards the place, and there found a little girl, about ten years old, sitting down on the plank of a little bridge. In her right hand she was holding the top of a broken crutch; in her left, a basket, which had just been upset, and a quantity of nuts were floating down the stream below. The child looked the picture of despair: she had been out alone gathering nuts and was returning to the cottage, when her crutch caught in a hole in the plank and was broken in two. The top she held in her hand, and the bottom floated down the stream with the nuts she had upset. There was no hand-rail to the plank, and so poor little Mary had nothing to hold by. She was afraid to get up lest she should overbalance herself and fall into the brook. There she sat—the picture of helplessness—when Willie came up. It was wonderful that she had not fallen into the brook; how she had escaped she could not tell.

Willie was soon with her. He first took her basket, then he put the broken piece of crutch into it and put it on the ground; then he helped her up, and with some difficulty got her off the plank. When he got her safely to the land their difficulties were not over, for it was still more than half a mile to her father's cottage. He could not carry her all the way, for Willie was but twelve years old himself. Whilst he was helping the little girl on very slowly he heard the sound of a lad whistling; he was coming towards them. Ah! it is Fred Preston, the one-armed boy; he also had been nutting.

'Fred,' said Willie, 'can you help me to get little Mary home? she has broken the crutch, and I cannot get her along very fast myself.'

'If I had two arms, sir,' said Fred, 'we could make a chair for her, and carry her along, but I am afraid she will not sit very comfortably on one arm.'

'Well, let us try,' said Willie.

So Willie took hold of Fred's arm, and Mary held Fred's basket, and left her own behind; but she had a very shaky seat, and they soon put her down. At last the boys put each an arm under one of Mary's, and, by putting her one foot on the ground and hopping, she got home in time.

Fred received his invitation on the spot, and with many thanks promised to come to the birthday feast.

Willie then took Mary into the house to her mother, who thanked Willie for taking such care of her little girl. 'Poor child,' said her mother, 'she is very lonely up here; I cannot send her to school now; it is three miles by the road, and it is too far for her to go.

'I was going to ask if she might come to my birthday feast, Mrs. Howard,' said Willie; 'it will be difficult to come, but there is a large perambulator at the Hall, if you could send for it.'

By this time Fred came running back with Mary's basket, and when he heard about the perambulator he at once offered to fetch it and wheel Mary to the feast.

Mary was much delighted, and thanked Willie for his great kindness to her, and Fred for offering to take her to the Hall. Fred then went home, but Willie stayed and rested a few minutes, and, when he left the cottage, Mary, full of spirits, hopped along the path, and opened the gate.

'If I had known you could have hopped so well, I should not have tried so hard to carry you,' said the boy.

Mary looked down upon the ground, and let fall a tear, for she was sorry he thought she had given him trouble for nothing. But Willie was only joking; he knew how the poor child trembled when he

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Willie coming to help Mary.

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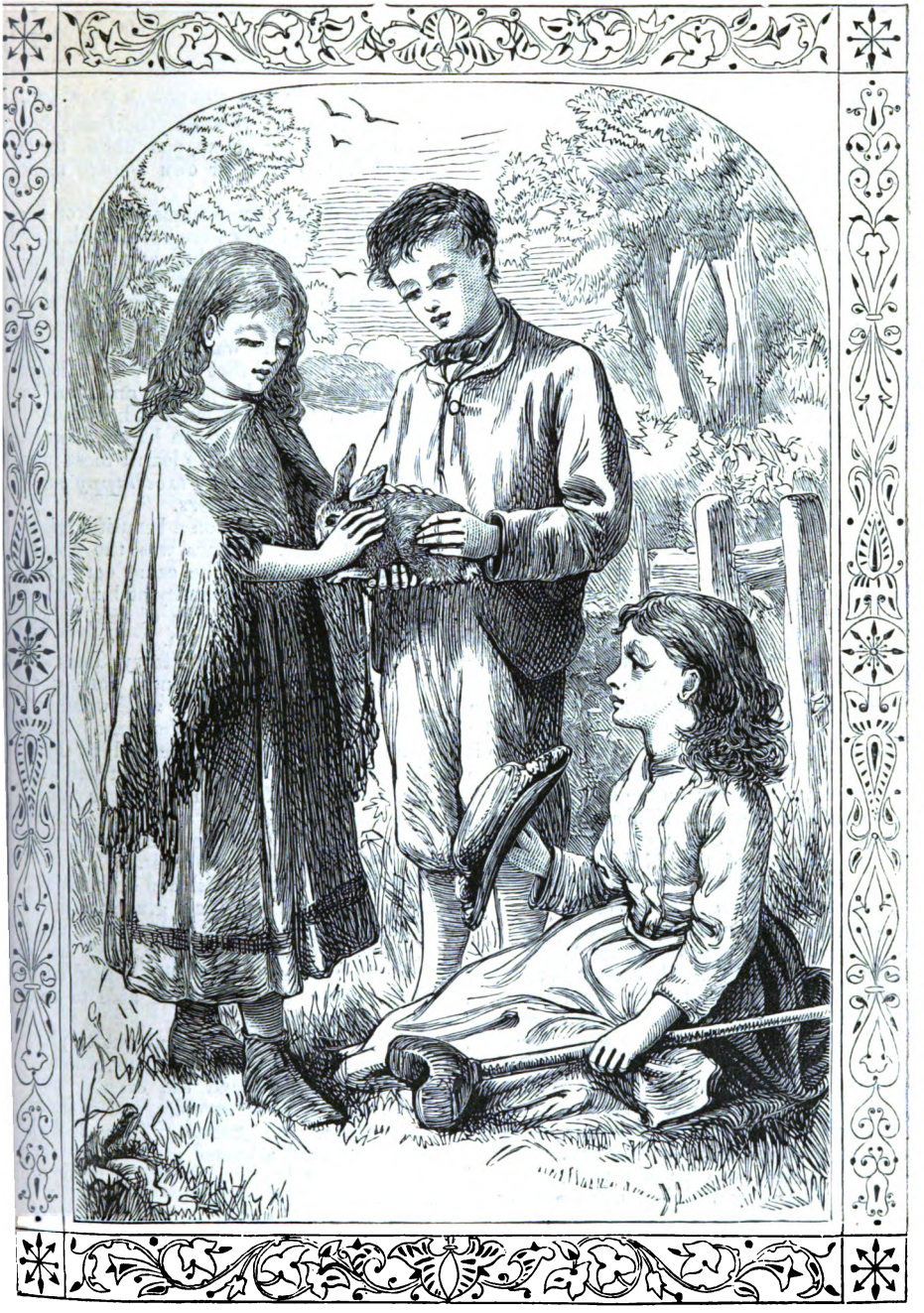

Willie showing the Girls his Rabbits.

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took her off the plank, and it was impossible for her to have hopped two yards then without falling. He saw he had made her sorry, and told her he was only joking.

'Now, Mary,' he said, 'if you come with me as far as that gate, I will forgive you.'

So he took her hand, and she hopped as far as the gate. He bade her good-bye, and then watched her go back. It was not far, but the poor child could not manage it, and fell down before she had got a dozen yards away. Willie ran back, and lifted her up, and did not leave her until he had safely placed her on a chair in the cottage.

One more visit he had yet to pay, and that was to poor little blind Agnes. He knew her better than he knew Mary, because her father kept one of the lodges at the Park. Willie had gone out of one gate and was returning by the gate that Agnes' father kept. Agnes was at home alone to-day; her father, who was gamekeeper, was out in the woods, and her mother had gone to the shop. Agnes had a brother and sister, but both were out at service. The blind child was always trusted to open the gate when a carriage came, in fact, by opening it so often she was so used to it that her mother always let her do it. The coachmen who were in the habit of coming to the Park knew the child and were always very careful. She was delighted with the prospect of the birthday feast, and was very glad to have the opportunity of meeting Mary again. Poor little girls! only two years ago they were merry school-fellows. Mary used to call for Agnes every morning to go to school. She could run then as well as Agnes, and Agnes could see as well as Mary. They had never met since their trouble, but they loved each other still. There was no hope of either of them recovering—a leg once off can never be put on again, and fever had so destroyed the pupils of the eyes, that Agnes would never more behold the light of the sun.

Fred, too, was an old playmate, and Harry Langley had had many a game at ball with Agnes and Mary. Agnes did not know whom she pitied most of all three, Harry, who was to go to the workhouse, Mary, who had lost her leg, or Fred, who had lost his arm. It was a good thing that she could feel for others, poor child, for it helped her to bear her own trouble more patiently.

When Willie's companions heard of his feast, and found they were not invited, they were very angry. So they amused themselves by making all manner of fun of him. One said he was going crazy; another, that if he preferred the company of beggars he was very glad he was not invited. But Willie went to bed that night with a heart overflowing with happiness, and, as he knelt down to say his prayers, he thanked God for making him more happy than he had ever been before. He learnt most fully on that day that *the way to be happy yourself is to do good to others.*

The feast happened on a beautiful bright day in October. Agnes was the first of the invited guests. She came early, and brought with her a quantity of bunches of acorns upon small boughs of oak, to help to decorate the school-room.

The next guest was Harry Langley, who stood with open mouth, staring at Agnes with her acorns, and wondered what they had to do with the feast. Then came the perambulator, wheeled by Fred Preston. Mary had brought a crutch with her, which her father made in a hurry to replace the broken one, and, leaning upon it with one arm and on Agnes with the other, went in to the feast.

The rector of the parish had been invited, and gladly came; and said grace for them. Willie waited on Agnes and cut her meat for her, and his sister Ethel, who was a few years older than Willie, waited upon Fred. The other two were able to wait upon themselves.

After dinner they all went out to play, and some of Willie's companions, who had been invited to spend the evening with him, got over their scruples, and came to help amuse the guests. They looked rather shy and ashamed at first, but very soon were as happy as Willie in trying to amuse his poor friends.

There was a capital swing, and each of the four took their turn. Whilst some of Willie's friends were swinging the two

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boys, he took the girls to see his rabbits. However, in giving a rabbit to Agnes to feel and stroke, they let it drop between them, and the little creature scampered off into the park.

Willie ran with all his might after it, and so did Mary, as fast as her lameness would let her. But the little rabbit gave them a long chase. Mary was soon left behind, although she hopped along nimbly. The rabbit soon turned out of the park, and got into the wood. Willie nearly caught it several times, but, just as he stooped to take hold of it, it would always get away. Poor Mary's chase, however, soon came to an untimely end: the crutch that had been so hastily made gave way in the wood, and she fell into a soft place covered with moss and leaves.

There was no fear of Mary being hurt, but the difficulty was, how to get back again. If any of you who read this little story try to hop in a place where the leaves and moss sink in at every step, you will then see what a difficult task poor Mary had to do. The harder she tried, the deeper her foot sank into its soft bed, until she was obliged to sit down and wait for help.

Agnes, too, being suddenly left by her two companions, knew not whither to go, nor which way to turn. She tried to find her way back into the house, but took the wrong road, and at last walked into an empty cow-shed, and groped about until she found a heap of straw upon which she sat, and, like Mary, waited for help. She did not sit down many minutes before the thought that possibly the cows might come in, alarmed her, and so she tried to return to the rabbit place; but, missing that, and hearing Mary's voice at a distance, she tried to join her. Mary shouted as she saw her coming, and tried to direct her to the place where she herself was, but unfortunately the blind girl could not reach the lame girl, for a ditch was in the way. There were the two girls, who could not help laughing at each other's misfortunes, as they were both so utterly helpless. Help, however, was near at hand, the rabbit being caught and put back into his hutch, Willie went to the swing to find his friends, and expected to see the girls there, and, when they could not be found, all thought they were playing at hide-and-seek.

So Ethel, Willie, and all the rest went to look for them. The barn, and the stables, and the cow-shed, were all searched in vain, and they were about to give up seeking, but Ethel suggested that the mark of Mary's crutch might be their guide, and by the help of that, they at last found the two poor prisoners. Philip Anstey was the first to see them, and he was the boy who had talked about the feast of beggars. But he was kind and good-natured at heart, and as soon as he saw Mary he laughed very much, but ran before all the others and helped her out.

Ernest Bradbury jumped the ditch in a moment and rescued Agnes, and they all returned as happy and merry a little party as could be found. Philip, as he helped Mary along, whispered in her ear that he would buy her a new strong crutch out of his pocket-money, and he kept his word. The children were all sorry when the time to go home came, and they all declared that they had spent a very pleasant afternoon. Thus ended Willie's feast, and the warm feelings of affection kindled in the breasts of 'the poor, the lame, the maimed, and the blind,' were not soon lost. The desire of doing good to others was implanted strongly in the hearts of those who entertained, and those who helped to amuse, the little afflicted ones.

You will be glad to hear that poor Harry did not go to the workhouse after all; as as he was an industrious lad, Willie's father gave him work on the farm. Fred, when a few years older, became the village postman. Mary became a dressmaker, and got plenty of work at the houses in the neighbourhood; Agnes is now a teacher in a blind school; and Willie is the squire of the village, and is known as one of the kindest friends of the poor and afflicted in the whole county.

W. M.

The world looks for men abroad, God looks for them at home.

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A LITTLE TRUE TALE.

ONCE Henry was rocking the new baby's cradle,
And he sang—though to peep o'er the side scarcely able—
'Don'tee cwy, babee,' and 'don'tee cwy, babee;
'Ain't dat a pritty sing? Pritty as may be?'
'That's only an old sing,' returned his wise brother,
Who to Henry's two years had just added another.

An old song it is truly, that still must be sung,
Both *by* us and *to* us till our last bell is rung.
'Don't ye cry, sister,' and 'don't ye cry, brother:'
Where, to match that song, will you bring another?

The Consoler, the Healer, first gave us that song;
Through our lives let us sing it, live we never so long.

To the wailing of sorrow, of want, and of pain,
With tenderness sing it again and again;
Giving, too, of our time, of our means, of our heart—
Of each sorrow we meet let us take up a part;
Saying still to each sufferer, 'Dry up your tears;
Take heart, and take courage, and lay down your fears.'

J. E. C. F.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. V.] MAY, 1871. [One Penny.

The Lost Goat.

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THE LOST GOAT.

Translated from the German by K. L.

IN a pretty green Alpine valley, which was surrounded with jagged glaciers, little Emma lived and fed her goats. She was always in the habit of letting the little creatures wander about at liberty, for they were quite tame, and never strayed far. They loved their young mistress, and would come when she called them, and would eat the fresh grass from her hands.

One day she was busy gathering strawberries on the slope of the hill, meaning to feast her mother with them when she should bring her her dinner at noon. The basket was soon filled, and she turned round again merrily to look after her little flock; but to her dismay, she found that one of the six goats was missing. She sought it in vain on the winding path in the valley, and by the brook behind the hill.

'It must have run away into the wood,' she said to herself, and ran off at once to look for it there.

She wandered about anxiously, calling her little favourite, and listening to hear if his bleating would lead her to his hiding-place. But all was silent: no sound in the forest except the rustling of the leaves and the twittering of the birds in the branches. All at once she started, for she saw among the trees, half hidden in the shade, and not far from her, a tall man in the dress of a pilgrim. He smiled kindly at her face of astonishment, and said, 'Can you show me a spring of water, my child? I have been wandering about for two hours in the forest, and am very thirsty.'

'Sir,' replied the child, 'there is no brook near here; but follow me, and I will give you some new milk from my goats.'

The man followed her wearily. By this time Emma had forgotten all about her lost goat, and only thought of the stranger's wants. He did not say much as they walked along, but whenever his eyes rested on the maiden, they filled with tears, and seemed to bless her.

And now they had reached the flowery spot where the goats were grazing, and here she saw with surprise, that the lost one had found its way back to the others again. With quick fingers Emma milked one of them, and gave the traveller a wooden bowlful, together with a piece of bread out of her bag, and the basket of ripe strawberries.

'I can get some more for mother,' she thought.

'What is your name, pretty maiden?' asked her guest, as he ate the fruit eagerly. 'You do not belong to these parts, I think?'

'My name is Emma: but how do you know that I am a stranger here?'

'Oh, I know more than that,' he replied, with a bright smile.

He looked at her long and earnestly. And at last he said in a solemn voice:—

'A castle was thy cradle: thy father—alas! a black cloud covers his memory; and thy sorrowing mother,—such a woman as is seldom seen on this side of Heaven,—her name, if I read aright, is Bertha.'

Emma turned pale, and looked in wonder at the pilgrim.

'Do not be afraid, my child,' he said; 'take me to your mother; I bring her tidings of a Swabian knight, who was once outlawed by the emperor, because, at a tournament at Worms ——'

'Oh, sir,' broke in Emma, 'do not tell any one the name of that knight. I see you know everything. Oh, tell me where he his! Where does he live?'

'You shall know everything in time; take me to your mother.'

'Here she comes,' cried Emma, turning towards the path which led to their cottage.

The pilgrim looked at her, and, as he did so, stood in silent delight, while Bertha climbed the hill. She carried a pitcher in her hand, and a fresh-baked cake in her apron. The bloom of her beauty had not yet faded from her noble countenance: but sorrow had saddened her eyes, and traced its deep lines on her once smooth brow. As she drew nearer, the pilgrim advanced slowly to meet her. At last, as

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if unable longer to restrain himself, he rushed forward.

'Bertha, my Bertha!' he exclaimed, embracing her with trembling joy.

'My Arnulph!' she said; and then she fell fainting on her husband's breast. Emma helped him to bring her mother back to consciousness. Bertha revived, and after a few minutes, the happiest of her life, she was able, supported by her husband and daughter, to return to their cottage home.

On the way, Arnulph related how, for a long time, he had been pursued by the friends of the knight, whom he had unhappily killed at the tournament; how he had wandered through foreign lands; had fought in the war against the infidels; had been appointed by the king to a post of high command, and had been thrice crowned with the victor's laurels.

'The Moors,' he went on, 'were quite driven out of the country; and so no human power could hinder me any longer from seeking my wife and child. On the borders of Germany I disguised myself in a pilgrim's dress, and ventured into the castle of my old friend, Bertram, whom you have to thank for your safety. From him I learned all he knew of your hiding-place: his faithful servant, who accompanied you here, was dead, otherwise I should not have had so much difficulty in finding you out. But the unseen hand of Heaven guided me, in a way I least expected, to meet my little Emma. In spite of my having left her a child of only six years of age, I knew her at the first glance by her likeness to her mother.'

The long and painful separation of the outlawed knight from his wife and child was thus at an end, and the once more happy family, thankful that they were again restored to each other, remained only for three days in their mountain cottage, and then they set out joyfully for Italy. They embarked at Genoa, and arrived at Lisbon in a few weeks. They made their home in a beautiful castle on the banks of the Tagus, and spent the rest of their lives very happily.

THE VAN.

WHILE taking my ten minutes' walk of a morning before work, I notice every kind of van and cart in our suburb. Many of them I see day after day, and I watch to see how the horses and ponies are treated. Some improve into sleek animals from lean, rough-coated jades, while others get daily more towards that state. Nothing I like better to see than the trust of a horse in its humane driver. How patiently and quietly he waits! Suddenly, the neck is arched and gracefully bent sideways towards the house, and before the man is well seated the good creature cheerfully trots on to the next calling-place.

One day I was much pleased at the group which you see in the picture. The artist has not done full justice to the beautiful little terrier, on whom the old pony relies as look-out for his master, whose little boy is one of the trio of friends. That boy can sit anywhere on that horse. Now he is astride on its tail-end, but I verily believe it would let him sit on its neck as well. Presently the master came, and I had some talk with him; he seemed exactly the sort of man I expected from the bearing of his belongings. Kindness was written on his face. I could have sold his little dog for a very handsome price for him to a lady-friend, but she could not make up her mind to have a pet about her whose ears were cropped. I wish everybody would refuse to purchase dogs that have been so treated. How much suffering it would save to those poor victims!

Boys who have to ride or drive, should always be tender-hearted and sparing of the speed and strength of their generous friends. When I see a little bully flog a horse and hurry it beyond its proper pace, I always think how pale he would look, how frightened he would get, if the docile and good-natured beast were to put out its strength against the lad or man who is ill-treating it.

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The Van.

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'The little girl cried bitterly.' P. 71.

SYBILLA'S RESOLUTION.

(*Continued from p.* 51.)

WHY, Sybil, what are you doing here? How is it you are not gone with the others?' was Lilian's exclamation as Sybilla entered.

'Oh, I thought I would have a quiet day with you instead; are you glad to see me?'

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'Of course I am; I had been thinking that I should be alone and quite dull all day.'

'I wonder Aunt Harriet likes to leave you,' said Sybil.

'She doesn't often; but she must sometimes, you know, or she would get quite done up. And then I am pretty well now, considering, and don't want anything but what nurse can do: so that it would have been a pity for mother not to go.

'Well, what are we to do? How did you intend to spend the day?'

'I meant to read and sew and do the best I could; but it would have been dreadfully dull before night. Now we can talk, and that will be pleasant. Nurse will be in directly and push my couch near to the window, and give me my things, and then we shall be comfortable.'

'Let me push the couch.'

'I am afraid it is too heavy.'

'Oh, no, it isn't!' and Sybilla pushed the light little couch with its burden to the window, reached Lilian's work-basket, and then seated herself in a chair beside her.

'You have got your cousin Ella with you, haven't you? Is she pleasant?' asked Lilian.

'I should think so. And then she is so good.'

'I don't think I should like her, then; I hate good people!'

'Oh, Lily, you don't mean that!'

'Yes, I do. There's Mrs. William Grey now; everybody calls her good; I think she's horrid, with her long sermony talk, and her stupid little stories about good children; if they had to lie here week after week, and month after month as I have, I guess they would not be quite so goody!'

'But, Lily, don't you think people ought to be good?'

'I suppose they ought,' said Lily, with a sigh; 'but if you won't tell, Sybie, I think, the people who are only good a little are the most pleasant.'

'Oh, but Lily, the martyrs, don't you think it is grand about them?'

'Oh, the martyrs! It was very well for them, but they lived so long ago, and good people in these days are not like them.'

'But cousin Ella says we ought to lead as holy lives as they did.'

'Does she? but I fancy nobody else does; at least, people don't live as if they thought so. Let us talk about something else.'

And so the two cousins talked and worked, and the morning passed pleasantly, and the afternoon was drawing to a close; but Lilian began to grow restless and impatient for the return of her mother and sister. For, truth to tell, owing to her affliction, Lily was very much spoiled, and accustomed to have all her wishes and fancies gratified; and, though Sybil did her best to entertain her, it was not the same as if her mother or sister had done it. Once or twice Sybil had shaken the couch, causing Lily to cry out with pain; then, too, Lilian had upset her work-basket, and was fretted because her cousin could not find her thimble, which had rolled into some out-of-the-way corner.

Lilian had not really a bad disposition; but, from the constant care her ill-health required, she was in great danger of becoming very selfish. It was so natural to those about her to consider her first in all their arrangements, that Lilian grew to feel herself the most important personage in the family, and to fancy that her comfort must be attended to before everything else.

Sybilla, whose mind was still full of the story of 'Viva Perpetua' and the thoughts it had roused in her, began again to speak of it to her cousin; but Lily was tired and in no mood to listen to it, and she interrupted somewhat pettishly:

'I wish, Sybil, you would give over talking about martyrs and such people, and tell me something cheerful!'

'You are cross, and nothing I could tell you would be cheerful,' was Sybil's answer.

'You are very unkind, Sybil; nobody talks to me so unkindly as you do.'

'Then you would be all the better if they did. Being ill has not done you the least bit of good; you are more selfish and ill-tempered than you were when you were well.'

Poor Lilian, who was used to get only caresses and tender pity, thought Sybil very hard and cruel, and, with great sobs, said so; adding that she wished Sybil had never

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come, she would have been happier all alone.

This was more than Sybil could bear; angrily going out of the room, she took her bonnet, and without a word of leave-taking started off home, and poor Lily was left to finish the day as best she could.

Sybilla did not go into the house, but sat down under the trees at the bottom of the garden. She tried to keep up her anger, but conscience had already begun to upbraid her. She had failed altogether, and that too in what she had meant to be self-sacrifice; she had been cross and unjust, as she was forced to confess. It seemed almost that she would have done better to go with the others; she had grieved Lily, and, perhaps, even done her harm by causing her to excite herself so. Altogether she felt very miserable, and bending her head on her knees as she sat on the ground, the little girl cried bitterly.

'Lily was cross, and when I have given up my pleasure to stay with her she might have been more agreeable,' she said, trying to excuse herself, but conscience would not spare her.

'It was your own wish to stay, and you ought to have borne with her.'

Sybilla was so busy with these thoughts that she did not notice the return of the pleasure-party, nor hear the approach of her cousin Ella, and she was quite startled to feel a hand laid upon her shoulder.

'What is it, Sybie dear?' Ella asked.

'Oh, Ella, I have been so naughty, I had better have gone with you; the more I try to do right the worse I am, it seems to me.'

'Tell me about it, dear.'

And Sybil gave an account of the day; she did not spare herself in the least, or try to throw the blame on Lilian; and this Miss Hargreave noticed with pleasure.

'What is the good of trying any more?' she asked in a despairing tone, as she finished her story.

'Because it is God's will. It is His will that you should try, even though you failed.'

'I don't think God cares. I don't see what it can matter to Him.'

'It does not matter to Him; not for His own sake, but for yours, because He loves you, and wishes you to be good.'

Sybilla was silent for a time, and then she said:

'Yes, I think God does love me. Do you think He will forgive me for having been so cross and naughty? I am very sorry. I wish Lily would forgive me.'

'Dear Sybie, you have Lily's forgiveness. We called to leave your aunt on the road, and bring you home, but Lily said you had gone; and then she whispered to me to tell you how sorry she was to have vexed you, and she hopes to see you soon, to know you are not feeling unkindly towards her.'

'Dear Lily, I was much worse than she was, and I will go and tell her so to-morrow.'

'Very well, then I think we should go into the house now or your mother will think you are lost, so come!'

And did Sybilla keep her resolution to gain a gentle Christ-like temper? Yes, but it was only after repeated failures that she succeeded: it was not in a week, or a month, or a year, that she grew into the gentle girl she is now, but after much striving and many falls into the old wilfulness and naughtiness; but she was really in earnest in her desire to overcome her failings, and whoso strives and prays will be sure to succeed in the end.

THE WAVES ON THE SEASHORE.

ROLL on, roll on, you restless waves,
That toss about and roar;
Why do you all run back again
When you have reached the shore?

Roll on, roll on, you noisy waves,
Roll higher up the strand;
How is it that you cannot pass
That line of yellow sand?

Make haste, or else the tide will turn;
Make haste, you noisy sea;
Roll quite across the bank, and then
Far on across the lea.

'We do not dare,' the waves reply:
'That line of yellow sand
Is laid along the shore to bound
The waters and the land;

'And all should keep to time and place,
And all should keep to rule,
Both waves upon the sandy shore,
And little boys at school.'

Aunt Effie's Rhymes.

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The Waves on the Seashore.

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Naaman's Little Maid.

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DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

NAAMAN'S LITTLE MAID.

TO the north of the land of Israel was the country called Syria, and the chief city of Syria was Damascus, which is thought to be the most ancient city in the world. Our picture shows us a little maiden who lived there more than 2700 years ago, when Benhadad II. was king of Syria, and Jehoram, the son of the wicked Ahab and Jezebel, was king of Israel.

During the war between the two nations parties of Syrians made their way into the land of Israel, plundered the inhabitants, and carried away as many as they could capture. Indeed king Jehoram himself would have fallen into their hands, if the prophet Elisha had not warned him of his danger. The damsel in the picture had been cruelly stolen away from her home by one of these Syrian companies, and had been sold as a slave to wait upon a rich lady in Damascus. We know neither the little captive's name, nor that of her mistress, but her master's name was Naaman, which meant 'pleasantness.' He was the commander-in-chief of the Syrian army, and it was thought by the Jews that he was the very archer whose arrow caused the death of Ahab at the battle of Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings, xxii. 34). If this is true it explains the words, *By him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria* (2 Kings, v. 1).

At her home in the land of Israel the damsel had no doubt heard of his fame, but when she became one of his slaves she found, that although he was the captain of the host, and the honoured friend of his master the king, yet he had that terrible skin-disease called leprosy. This would greatly surprise the little Israelite, because in her country a leper was quite separated from his family and friends, and was forced to dwell outside the town, either alone or with other lepers as wretched as himself, shunned and dreaded by every one else. God's law ordained this for His people, because leprosy was the special type of sin; but the Syrians and other heathen nations had no such dread of the disease, as they did not know about the guilt and defilement of sin.

But though he had not to leave his home there was much to make Naaman's life sad. His snow-white, ghastly appearance was shocking to see; his children and their descendants must be lepers so long as there was one of them living; and because no doctor could cure the disease the leprosy must become worse and worse, until at last it caused a most painful death. The little damsel, instead of selfishly thinking about her own loneliness, or rejoicing in the misery of one who kept her in slavery, returned good for evil by feeling deep compassion for her afflicted master. She knew that it would be useless for him to seek the help of his god, because, like the rest of his countrymen, he was a worshipper of Rimmon, the idol-god of pomegranates and other Syrian fruits. But she thought that although he did not serve the one true God, yet surely if he went to the prophet Elisha he would be cured by a miracle as wonderful as those which the holy man had worked in Israel whilst she was living in the land.

Now this, like all other good thoughts, was sent by God's Holy Spirit, and the little captive maiden's example teaches children that they may be of the greatest use to other people, if they turn *thinking* into *doing* whenever God puts such thoughts into their minds. Instead of fancying herself too young or too lowly to speak to her mistress, she ventured one day to say to her, *Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy* (2 Kings, v. 3). What her mistress said we are not told, but some one repeated to Naaman what the little maid had been heard to declare, and so anxious was he to see whether her words would prove true, that he set out as soon as possible on his journey to Samaria, carrying with him a letter to Jehoram, the king of

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Israel, from Ben-hadad, his own sovereign, who supposed that Elisha would work the miracle if it were his king who bade him to do so.

Perhaps the good little slave-girl stood by while her mistress watched Naaman depart with horses and chariots, and servants, and with a present for Elisha of *ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold* (probably altogether equal to 3000*l.* of our money), *and ten changes of raiment* (verse 5).

Some days passed by, and then Naaman returned. What must have been the damsel's joy and thankfulness to find that not only was her master so perfectly cleansed from his leprosy that his flesh was as healthy as that of a little child, but so changed also in heart as to have become a humble, faithful believer in God, and able to say, '*Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel!*' (verse 15). Most likely she heard from some of the servants, or from her mistress, how all this had come to pass, and how Elisha had refused to receive any gift for what he had done. We, too, may know about it by reading the delightful story in the fifth chapter of the Second Book of Kings, which also tells us how, for his covetousness and deceit, Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, was smitten with the leprosy, from which Naaman had just been cleansed.

Much as we should like to hear what befell her after this time, we know nothing more about this little maiden whom God sent to be so great a blessing to Naaman, and to make known among the heathen the wonders of His own Almighty power and goodness.

Leprosy, we have said, was a type of sin. Does not each of us know of some one who is living in wilful sin, and is too ignorant to tell how to be cleansed from its guilt, and delivered from its power? Many such there are, close round about us, even in this Christian land. And shall we not wish and pray that we may lead some such one to know that Holy Saviour by Whose Blood, once shed for us on the Cross, we and they can be washed, and made clean?

THE CLOUDS.

ONE day John and Mary took a walk with their father. It was a very warm, sultry day, and far up in the sky were many clouds.

'Just look,' said John, 'what big clouds!'

'Oh, yes,' said Mary; 'I wonder what the Lord has made the clouds for?'

'The clouds are very useful,' said the father. 'The Lord has made them because He loves us. The clouds are big *curtains*.'

'Curtains!' exclaimed the children, in much wonder.

'Yes, truly,' answered the father; 'don't you know what we use curtains for?'

'Oh, yes,' said Mary, 'I know. When the sun shines too strongly, we pull down the curtains to keep off the heat.'

'Quite so,' replied the father. 'Now, when the sun shines very hot on the fields, the cows in the meadows are sadly annoyed, and the flowers and plants bow their little heads to the ground; then the Lord spreads out the clouds before the sun, just as you pull down the curtains, and the cows begin to leap and to run about joyfully, and the flowers and plants lift up their heads with gratitude!'

While the father was speaking, it began to rain. They went into a farmhouse for shelter. The children placed themselves at the window to look at the rain, which was falling in heavy showers.

'That rain, too,' said the father, 'comes from the clouds.'

'What a pity!' said John; 'we cannot walk now; everything is wet.'

'True,' answered the father. 'Still it is very useful. The Lord has made the clouds to give rain. They are big *watering-pots*.'

'Watering-pots!' exclaimed Mary, with amazement.

'Yes, my dear,' said the father. 'What does our gardener use his watering-pot for?'

'To wet the ground,' said John quickly.

'Yes,' continued Mary; 'for if the ground is too dry the flowers will not grow.'

'Just so,' said the father. 'But when

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the big meadows and fields are too dry, who is the great Gardener? who is able to water them? And when the farmers' land is

First Primroses,

so dry that the potatoes, and the cabbage, and the wheat won't grow, who is to wet all that?'

'Oh, I see! I see!' exclaimed John. 'Then the Lord takes those big clouds and presses rain out of them.'

'He does,' said the father; 'the clouds are big watering-pots with which the Lord wets this beautiful world of ours, just as the gardener wets our garden.'

The rain was soon over, and the father again went out with his children.

There the great clouds floated about in the sky. The sun had just broken through them, and given them all sorts of fine colours. Some had gilt edges: others were red like crimson; some, again, were purple, pink, light blue and dark blue. Many of them took strange shapes. On the left-hand side was a large bluish cloud, that looked just like a large ship, with its sails set up to the top; on the right was a dark cloud, that had very much the shape of a big cow, with three horns.

The children looked with delight at the beautiful sights above them.

'Now, you see,' said the father, 'that the clouds are *pictures* too. We hang up pictures and engravings in our rooms. So the Lord hangs up golden, purple, and blue clouds on the walls of the sky, to make a beautiful drawing-room for our whole earth.'—*De Liefde.*

FIRST PRIMROSES.

O HOW sweet, how lovely!
Pretty, pretty flowers;
Telling us of Spring and
Happy sunny hours.

Coming thus to gladden,
Coming thus in Spring,
Coming with the skylark;
Hark! I hear him sing.

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Pretty, lovely primrose!
Growing all around;
Hiding! were you from me?
Ah! but now you're found.

Now I'll fill my basket,
And take you away;
Take you home to sister,
Then with you we'll play.

Sister cannot see you,
Cannot come with me;
Oh, so pleased to have you
She I know will be.

When I take you to her,
Then I know she'll say,
'God sends me the flowers
So pretty and so gay.'

God hath made the sunshine,
Birds, and trees, and all;
God makes me so happy;
At His feet I'll fall.

May I love Him always,
Little though I be,
For He sends us blessings
And He blesses me.

R. Rew.

JENNY, THE LITTLE THIEF.

CHAPTER I.

NORTH PIER was a small fishing-village on the north coast of Darkshire. Like most fishing-villages it had not much to boast of in the way of streets or shops. There was one long, straggling street, about half a mile in length; at one end of which stood the 'Old Inn,' with a large open space in front, where was the village pump. Around this pump a troop of noisy, quacking ducks were always to be seen, enjoying themselves in the puddles which abounded there.

Just opposite the 'Old Inn' was the post-office, kept by Trout, the chief butcher in the place, or rather, I should say, by his wife, for he himself was seldom sober enough to do any business. Mrs. Trout used to amuse herself on a leisure day by examining each letter (for there were not very many), feeling it with her finger and thumb to find if there were any money in it, and holding it up to the light to read any little bits that might be seen through the thin envelope. Not that Mrs. Trout intended to be dishonest—far from it; but the spirit of curiosity is very strong in some people, and often leads them into what is dishonest, and Mrs. Trout was one of those who was so led.

A little further on from the post-office there was a road leading down to the beach, and just where the road branched off from the street was the blacksmith's shop. At the further end of the village you found yourself on the edge of the cliff, guarded by an iron railing. Looking over it you saw the harbour, which was generally pretty full of vessels.

Notwithstanding its unfashionable appearance at the time our story begins, North Pier had lately become a favourite resort in the summer for gentlemen's families, who were attracted to it by the bracing healthiness of the air, the fine, bold, cliff scenery, and the beautiful, hard, sandy beach, extending for a distance of two miles, where children might amuse themselves for half the day with their wooden spades and pails.

It was a lovely afternoon, towards the end of September, when a lady and gentleman, with their two eldest children, a boy and girl, aged about eight and nine, drove in their pony-carriage through the village. Mr. Scott, for that was the gentleman's name, was clergyman of a parish about twenty miles from North Pier, and had come there the week before with his wife and family for a month's change. It was, indeed, not much of a rest to himself, for he had to go backwards and forwards for his Sunday services; and as there was no railway or coach, the weekly journeys had to be made in his little pony-carriage, so that, as far as himself and the pony were concerned, they would just as soon have stayed at home. But Mrs. Scott and one of the children needed change, and all agreed that if they were going away there was no place like North Pier for enjoyment.

But to return to our story.

They were driving quietly through the

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village, and stopping every now and then to gaze on the beautiful distant cliffs, lighted up with the setting-sun, when a little girl appeared out of one of the numerous openings, or 'ops,' as the inhabitants called them, which branched out of the main street, and approached the carriage.

'Gi' me a penny, will 'ee?' she said, addressing Mr. Scott with an appealing sort of look. Mr. Scott shook his head and drove on. But the little girl was not to be daunted in that way. As the carriage moved on briskly, she ran along by the side, every now and then repeating her request, 'Gi' me a penny now; do 'ee, there's a good gen'leman.'

'No,' said Mr. Scott, 'I never give pennies to little girls who beg;' upon which she only laughed, and still continued running.

She was a short, stout little maid, about nine years old. There was a roguish twinkle in her eyes and a half-defiant tone in her voice.

Presently she spoke again: 'Ain't 'ee a-going to give me no penny at all, then? P'raps you haven't got any with 'ee.' Mr. Scott was inclined to take no notice of this speech, but his wife was rather taken with the child's appearance, and persuaded him to stop and speak to her.

'What would you do with a penny, if I gave you one?' he said.

'Buy a little book,' the child answered, with a grin.

'But how do you know you can get a book for a penny?'

'Oh, I knows,' was the answer.

'Can you read it when you get it?'

'Iss, to be sure, I can read—I've a been to school.'

'What school do you go to?'

'I don't go to any now, since father's dead. I used to go to Dame Martin's school.'

'Where is that?'

'On the road as you goes down to the beach, up them steps.'

'And how long has your father been dead?'

'Six months agone, come Saturday. Father was killed; the van went over him, and mother's nothing to live on now. We're nine of us at home, and I'm the eldest.'

'You are not the eldest surely,' said Mr. Scott; 'you don't look nine years old yet.'

'Yes, I be the eldest, then, and I'm eleven; but come, you've forgot the penny, I reckon, and I wants to buy a little book.'

'That is not the way to ask,' said Mr. Scott; 'and let me tell you, it would be much better if you were to try to earn something for your mother, instead of running about the village, begging.'

'But I don't like work. I likes running about best, and the gentry all'ays gives me pennies, when I ask them. Come now, do 'ee, just this once.'

'Well, there's a penny for you this time,' said Mr. Scott, unable to resist any longer; 'but don't you ever ask me for any again, or I shall have to drive you away with this,' he said, flourishing his whip, and smiling as he spoke.

'All right,' she said, 'I won't ask 'ee again;' and off she ran.

And now, perhaps, you would like to know something more about her than she has told you herself. Her name was Jenny Stone, and her father had been for many years driver of a van between North Pier and Torford, a town about fifteen miles distant. One Saturday night, when returning late from Torford market, he fell off the van, which passed over his body, and he was taken up dead. His widow was thus left with a family of six young children (Jenny, I am sorry to say, generally said they were nine, to help her begging). The inhabitants of North Pier, moved with pity for the poor woman, raised a good sum of money for her, and on this she managed to live for some months.

But she was an idle, dishonest woman, and when the summer came, and her stock of money was getting low, instead of getting work for herself at home (which she could easily have done, for she was a good laundress), she sent Jenny out to lurk about the village, and get what she could by begging from the visitors. And Jenny did not at all dislike this. With her pititul story and pretty face she often excited the compassion of her listeners, who were struck with the wild, gipsy-looking child, and took no pains to conceal it from her; so that she soon began to

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get more and more bold and forward in her manner.

Poor child! it was a life which would soon lead to misery and ruin, and there seemed no chance of her being rescued from it; for, unfortunately, the clergyman of North Pier lived two or three miles off, and only came there on Sundays to give one service in a small Chapel of Ease. But Jenny had a Father in heaven who had not forgotten His poor neglected child, and who would one day raise up kind friends in her behalf.

(To be continued.)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VI.] JUNE, 1871. [One Penny.

'I could run races the whole day long.'

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FIVE YEARS OLD.

THIS is my birthday—did you know?
Once I was four—long, long ago;
Once I was three, and two, and one:
Only a baby that could not run.

Now I am five I am old and strong,
I could run races the whole day long;
But, of course, I do lessons every day,
Only the little ones always play.

My long curls are cut, mother kept one curl;
I am so glad *not* to look like a girl.
Mother was sorry, I cannot think why;
I do not care for my curls, not I.

Perhaps, mother dear, now I've learnt to sit still,
Will take me to church—I hope that she will.
In the morning I mean, when the service is long;
I should not be tired, now I'm old and so strong.

I mean to grow bigger, and older and older:
Some day perhaps I shall be a brave soldier.
I think I'm the happiest boy alive:
Should you not like to be me now I'm five?

A*.

JENNY, THE LITTLE THIEF.

(*Continued from page* 80.)

CHAPTER II.

IT was a day or two after the meeting with Jenny in the street, that Barbara and Willie Scott came rushing into the room where their mother was sitting.

'Oh, mother, when *are* you going down on the beach? it is past eleven now, and we have been swinging till we are tired; if we don't go soon we shan't have any time for playing on the rocks.'

'My dear children, you must have patience a little longer. I have so many letters to write this morning; run away and amuse yourselves until I am ready.'

'But we may go and order the donkey-chair, mayn't we; and you will be ready by the time it comes?'

'No, dears, it is of no use to order it yet; I shall not be ready in less than an hour.'

'Well, then, mother,' said Willie, in a pleading tone, 'mayn't Barbara and I go down on the beach by ourselves? Nurse says, she is not ready to go down with the little ones yet.'

'Well, dears,' said their mother, 'as the tide is very low and you cannot come to any harm, I don't mind your going by yourselves for once. But who will drive the donkey for me, Willie?'

I must tell you that Mrs. Scott always went about in a little donkey-chair, not being at all strong, and Willie was her coachman.

'Oh, Edwin, the boy at the Inn, will drive you down to the beach,' replied Willie; 'and then I shall be there to take charge of Peter (the donkey), so that Edwin need not stay.'

'Very well, off with you then, and don't get into mischief.'

Cals-Othen, as the house they lodged in was called, was close above the beach, and the two children, taking their spades in their hands, ran quickly down the steep road, and found themselves on the sands.

'Let's go over to the Bee's Nose Rocks, Barbara,' said Willie; 'perhaps we shall see some little fish in the pools, and we can try to catch them with our spades.'

'Oh, yes; there are lots of little pools over there: and do you know, Willie, I saw some sea-daisies in one of them the other day—we will take them home and put them in water.'

The children had not been amusing themselves long amongst the rocks, when a little girl came towards them with a shrimping-net on her shoulder and a tin can slung around her neck, and began shrimping in a pool close by.

'Barbara,' said Willie, in a low tone, 'that is the little girl who begged so the other evening. Let's go and see what she is doing.'

So they clambered down from the rocks, and stood hand-in-hand on the opposite side of the pool from Jenny, watching her as she waded in up to her knees, driving the net before her, and then drew it back

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quickly, and presently put a handful of shrimps in her tin can. The children went round the pool nearer to Jenny, and at last Willie summoned up courage to ask,—

'How many have you caught to-day?'

'All those there,' said Jenny, showing her can almost full.

'Is it hard work?' he asked again. 'I wonder if I could do it.'

''Tain't hard if you knows how to do it,' said Jenny, grinning; 'but this net is too heavy for you, I reckon—you may try it a bit if you likes, only you'd better take off your shoes and stockings first.

So Willie quickly pulled them off and set manfully to work. But, as Jenny had said, the net was too heavy for him, and he was soon obliged to give up; not, however, before he had caught a few shrimps, to his great delight.

'I know where you can get a smaller net, if you want one,' said Jenny; 'there's a man as sells 'em in the village.'

'Oh! couldn't we go and get one now?' exclaimed Willie. 'Will you show us where he lives?'

'Yes, I'll show 'ee if you likes,' said Jenny. 'He's called Mr. Burt, and keeps a school.'

'But, Willie,' said Barbara, 'how do you know mother would like us to go? We must ask her first.'

'Oh, mother wouldn't mind, I'm sure. She said the other day I might have one, only she did not know where to get any: but, there, I see her coming, and they can't get Peter over the stream; come along, Bar,' and off they ran, followed by Jenny.

There was a wide stream, although very shallow, which ran across one part of the beach, over which Peter always disliked going. No amount of beating or poking would get Peter to cross if he had made up his mind not to. The way in which Willie generally managed to get him over, was by taking a piece of bread in his hand and going on before him, holding it just under his nose, when Peter would walk after him step by step and try to catch the tempting morsel.

Willie now arrived just as Peter was beginning to get obstinate, and having conducted his mother safely over, he asked if he and Barbara might go with Jenny and get the net, to which Mrs. Scott consented.

Old Mr. Burt lived up a little 'op' in the poorest part of the village. When they came to the entrance of the 'op' Jenny pointed out his house to the two children, saying,—

'I'll wait here till you come back.'

'Oh, no! you must come too,' they both exclaimed; 'we don't know what to ask him for.'

'Why, you've only to ask him for a shrimping-net, and he'll give it to 'ee all right,' said Jenny.

'But, Jenny, why won't you come?' persisted Willie, who, to tell the truth, was rather shy of facing the old man.

'He'll beat me, I'm afeared, if I goes there,' said Jenny, shaking her head decidedly. 'I didn't say my lesson perfect once, when I went to him for schooling, and he said if he ever caught me again he'd give me a good hiding.'

Now, the truth was, that old Mr. Burt had found out Jenny's begging tricks, and she had even one day ventured to beg a penny of him, but certainly never again would she be so bold; for he had, as Jenny said, threatened to beat her well if she ever again came near him.

So, with beating hearts, Willie and Barbara went hand-in-hand up to the house where this terrible old man lived, and knocked at the door. After some time the door was opened just wide enough for the old man to put out his head, and the children got a glimpse of a miserable-looking hovel, very dull and gloomy inside and out. Willie in his own mind was glad that he was not one of Mr. Burt's scholars.

'Well,' said the old man, 'what do you want!'

'Please sir,' said Willie, 'I want a shrimping-net, and Jenny said you kept them.'

'Oh, that's it, is it? well let's see,' said Mr. Burt, stepping out and closing the door after him, as though there was something not to be seen inside. 'I wonder what kind of net it is you want—must it be a round one—so, or a three-cornered one—so,' drawing with his stick on the ground as he spoke.

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'Oh, it must be a three-cornered one like Jenny's,' said Willie, 'only it must be smaller, so that I can use it.'

'And what size is Jenny's, young gentleman?'

'I'll run and get it, shall I? and then

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you'll be able to see,' said Willie; 'Jenny is only just round the corner; she was afraid to come any nearer, because she said you would beat her.'

'Stop a minute, young gentleman,' said Mr. Burt, laying his hand on Willie's shoulder just as he was going to run off. 'Is it Jenny Stone you're speaking of? for if it is, let me tell you one thing, that Jenny is a bad girl, and will never come to any good, and the less you have to say to her the better. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," as the holy Paul says, and she will be leading you into mischief if you don't take care. Parents ought to know better than to let their children go about without any body to look after them; those grand folk don't seem to care what becomes of their children. Now, you take my advice and go away straight home, and never speak to that wicked girl again,' he said, taking his hand off Willie's shoulder as he spoke.

But Willie burst out, 'You're a wicked, cruel old man, you are, and Jenny is a very good girl, and I shan't listen to anything you say; and I'm sure my mother does care about us—you don't know anything about it; and now,' he said, catching hold of Barbara's hand and preparing to run, 'I don't mean to have any of your nets—I can get one somewhere else.'

'Well, get along with 'ee, you're a bad set all of you, I believe,' said the old man, waving them away with his hand, and returning into his dark dwelling.

The children joined Jenny at the corner, and gave her an account of their interview. 'And now,' said Willie, dolefully, almost ready to cry, 'I suppose I can't get a net at all.'

'Oh yes, I reckon you can,' said Jenny; 'Mr. Cairn has generally got two or three spare ones—he's a carpenter, and don't live far off—we'll go and see.' Accordingly they ran to his house, where they got one. Willie took possession of it in triumph, and he and Barbara then hastened home to their dinner, having appointed to meet Jenny again on the beach the next morning, that they might begin their shrimping under her guidance.

(To be continued.)

MARTINS.

A Story founded on Fact.

A PAIR of house martins built their nest under the verandah of a house, just above the nursery window. Great interest was taken in them by the children, who were delighted to watch Mr. and Mrs. Martin first build their nest, then to see Mrs. Martin sitting on the eggs for such a long while so patiently, while Mr. Martin perched close by and chattered to her; sometimes he would come with some nice little insects in his mouth, which he would give her; then, at last, after what seemed to the children such a very long while, Mrs. Martin turned all the empty egg-shells out of her nest, and they saw some little birds, looking like a soft bunch of hair. For the first few days Mrs. Martin did not leave the nest for long at a time, but as the little martins grew older and bigger Mr. and Mrs. Martin had to leave them a great deal, to find food to satisfy their hungry little ones. The children wanted to throw bread out of the window, but their nurse told them that martins do not care for bread, so they had to be contented with watching how the little martins used to open their yellow beaks, and listen to the noise they made (for martins talk a great deal) when their father or mother came near the nest. Soon they grew old enough to learn how to fly, and very busy indeed were Mr. and Mrs. Martin teaching them, and the children often used to laugh at the funny way the young birds flew at first. But they soon found out the right way, and in a little while they did not care to come back to their warm dry nest, and did not want their father and mother to take care of them any more. So when Mr. and Mrs. Martin found that their children no longer required their care, and that they could find their own food, they left them, and returned to the old nest, where Mrs. Martin hopped in, laid some little white eggs, and then sat as patiently as before. After two weeks

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Mrs. Martin turned out the empty egg-shells, and there, as before, was seen a little bunch of hair, and little yellow mouths; but these little martins were not so strong as the others had been, it was not such warm weather, and the poor little birds felt the damp; they needed the sun to come and warm them, while their mother left them to get food, for she was obliged to go and help their father to catch insects, as he could not find enough alone for his hungry little family. Well, the days got shorter and colder, and the young birds did not grow much, and were not nearly old enough to leave the nest when the time came when all swallows and martins leave this country for the winter, because they must go across the sea, into a much warmer country, where it is more like summer. So a number of swallows and martins met together on the top of the house, and talked about when they should start. What were Mr. and Mrs. Martin to do? if they went their children would die of cold and hunger, and if they stayed with them they themselves would be sure to die. After a great deal of chattering they thought it would be best to leave their little ones, and fly away with the other martins and swallows to the warm country. So away they flew, and left the poor little martins to die of cold and hunger, because they were not strong enough to go with their parents. A few weeks after, when the nest under the verandah was pulled down, in it was found the skeletons of the poor little birds. The next year Mr. and Mrs. Martin came back again, and built another nest in the same place, and the next brood of martins were able to fly away with their parents when the cold weather came.

And now, my dear children, you must not be hasty in your judgment, and say that it was because Mr. and Mrs. Martin did not love their children that they left them to die, for the same instinct which taught them to build their nest, and rear their young, taught them also the exact time to fly away to a warmer climate, and showed them that they would do no good to their young by staying with them, because when the very cold weather came they would all have died together. A.

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

ESTHER, OF SHUSHAN.

MOST children who read *The Prize* know, that because the people of Judah persisted in obstinate rebellion and idolatry, God permitted them to be taken away from their own pleasant land, and to be carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, where they were kept during the Seventy Years' Captivity. Whilst they were there the Babylonian empire was conquered by the Medes and Persians; and thus the captives became the subjects of the brave Persian king Cyrus, about whom Isaiah had prophesied 170 years before (Isa. xlv. 1). At the earnest prayer of the prophet Daniel, when the seventy years were over, God put it into the heart of Cyrus to give the Jews leave to return to their desolate land, and rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, as we read in the first chapter of Ezra. Now as Judæa was their true home, all the Jews ought to have hastened thither, with hearts eager to share in the work of restoration. But many chose rather to stay behind, and enjoy the wealth which they and their fathers had gained during the Captivity. As worshippers of the true God they were far more trustworthy in business than the heathen, and therefore many were appointed to high offices in the Persian empire. Among the Jews who were thus trusted was one named Mordecai, whose young and beautiful cousin is the damsel in our picture. Her name was Hadassah, which means 'myrtle,' but it was afterwards changed by her husband to Esther, —by which name she is generally called. Having been left an orphan she was brought up by her relative Mordecai, who was so much older than she, as to be more like a father to her than a cousin, and so Hadassah did whatever he commanded her.

Mordecai, being in the household of King Ahasuerus, was obliged to live in Shushan, which, though now a most desolate spot, was then the magnificent city in which the

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Persian kings had their favourite winter palace, where much of their time was spent in feasting and luxury. Hadassah must often have heard of the doings of Ahasuerus, and how he had sent away his queen Vashti, for having disobeyed his drunken commands once when he was revelling with his nobles at a feast. We may be sure the gentle, modest girl, knew that Vashti had been right in refusing to obey Ahasuerus, and no doubt she felt sorry for the queen's disgrace.

About four years after the king had put away his wife, Hadassah was taken from her home to the palace, by messengers who had been ordered by Ahasuerus to search for the most beautiful maidens in the empire, in order that from among them he might choose one to be queen in Vashti's place. Of all who were thus brought together, she was the only one who did not try to set off her beauty by any other adornments than those she was obliged to wear. Her simple appearance and gentle manner so pleased the king that he took her to be his wife, and set the royal crown upon her head. He did not know that she was a Jewess, because Mordecai had desired her not to make known to what nation she belonged, and she obeyed his command.

On account of her loveliness she now received the name of Esther, which signified 'a star.' But to be made Queen of Persia was no enviable lot. Ahasuerus was a passionate tyrant, whose will was the law of the empire, and his fits of cruelty were so reckless that they are almost beyond belief when we read of them. In his best moments he could be kind and good-natured to those who pleased him, and it would seem that Esther was often able to influence him for good.

The most striking instance of this, and the greatest event in Esther's history, was the saving of her Jewish countrymen from a terrible massacre, to which the king had given his consent at the advice of a malicious Amalekite, named Haman. At the risk of her own life the queen ventured unbidden into her husband's presence, and by her courage and self-devotion obtained permission for all the Jews to defend themselves against their enemies. This was the utmost that Ahasuerus could grant, because a Persian decree could not be altered if once it had been written down among the laws of the empire. Haman was hanged upon the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai; and the Jews, instead of being put to death, had '*light, and gladness, and joy, and honour,*' during the rest of the reign of Ahasuerus. In gratitude to God they appointed a solemn feast to be kept every year in remembrance of their wonderful escape; and because Haman had drawn lots to find out what time would be best for their slaughter they called it the Feast of Purim, that is, the Feast of Lots.

It is often noticed, that the book of Esther, which tells us all this, has not once in it the name of God. But let us remember that every chapter of it shows the wonderful working of God's providence in even the smallest matters, and the whole book shows how He overrules all things for good, and makes even the wrath of man to praise Him.

THE GOOD CHILDREN.

WEARY and faint the blind man came
Unto the cottage door—
He'd walked so far, his feet were lame,
And his dog could run no more.

The sun was shining bright and clear,
But he could not see the sun;
The rich ripe grapes were hanging near,
But he perceived not one.

Kind little Mary saw him come,
And so did John her brother;
And quick into the house they ran,
To tell their loving mother.

But soon the little girl appeared
With a bowl of milk and bread,
And Rover's ears were both upreared
When he heard her gentle tread.

He watched the bowl with wistful eye,
And, plain as looks could speak,
He said his tongue was very dry,
And he had nought to eat.

Then John brought out some wholesome food—
He was a generous boy;
And in his heart it did him good
To see poor Rover's joy.

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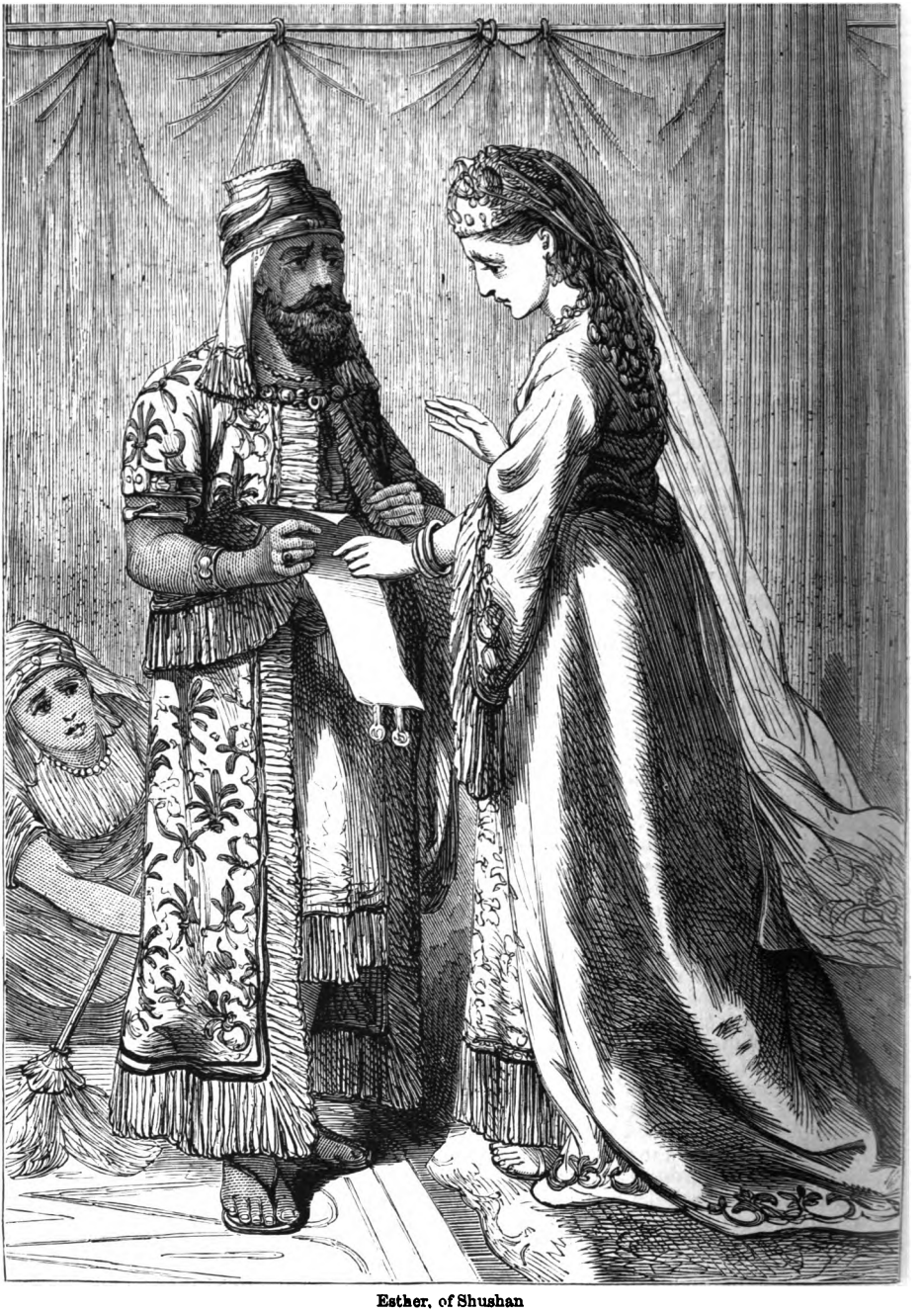

Esther, of Shushan

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The Good Children.

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The blind old man was very glad
When his dog received his share
Full fervently he blessed the lad,
And thanked kind Mary's care.

And as he rose up to depart,
He to the children said,
'May each preserve a loving heart,
When Age has bleached the head.

'And this shall be my daily prayer—
For I cannot, if I would,
Ask greater blessings for your share
Than the love of doing good.'

Easy Rhymes.

THE HISTORY OF A VIOLET.

Written by a little girl in the North.

BEFORE I tell you the story which the Violet whispered to me, I will tell you something about the garden in which it grew. Primroses and other spring flowers abounded in the garden, and not one weed was to be seen. The beds of flowers were scattered here and there, and the paths wound in and out among them, while a few trees were opening their fresh green leaves, and the bright, prickly holly-bushes, with their clusters of glistening scarlet berries peeping out, looked very pretty. The cottage in this garden was the picture of an English home. Ivy climbed round the porch and windows, setting off the red-tiled roof and the white curtains of the little parlour. The song of merry warblers, some of whom had just come from distant lands, was very pleasant to the ear, and it made you feel happy and cheerful to watch them building their nests in the branches of the friendly old trees. The door of the cottage is open to let in the sweet morning air, so you can peep in if you wish and see what is going on. You enter upon a tidy kitchen. Clean plates are ranged in order in a closet, and the red-brick floor is well swept. On the window-sill is a glass of flowers, and in a corner of the room are fine winter apples piled in a large basket. A little girl in a brown dress and white apron is making bread, and two merry children are trying to learn their lessons while they sit on the doostep.

So now we have had a look at the cottage and garden, I will tell you the story which the Violet whispered to me, which was as follows:—

I was one of the prettiest of my kind, my neighbours said; but I verily believe that I was as good-looking as a common violet. Humble and modest as I was, still I delighted to send forth my perfume for the delight of those who passed by. One day as I was enjoying the morning dew, which strengthened and refreshed me, the usual stillness was disturbed by the noise of wheels. At the same moment a small light cart drove up at the gate, and an old woman got out and walked up the path that led to the cottage door.

'Oh, here is granny, mother! Charley, Rosy, here is granny!' exclaimed a little girl running out, and throwing her arms round the old woman's neck she covered her face with kisses.

'La, honey! how you go on; stop a bit and let me go in and rest my poor old legs,' said the old lady when she was fairly out of breath.

'Oh, one more kiss,' exclaimed the little girl.

But grandmother sent her off laughing, and Mrs. Austin (Rosy's mother) brought the old lady into the house, welcoming her gladly. I do not know what passed when they were in, but I have no doubt that grandmother was made very comfortable and had plenty of news to tell her daughter, for Mrs. Mendall (that was the old lady's name) lived a long way off, and seldom got so far as her eldest daughter's house. Whenever she came she was warmly welcomed, and always enjoyed her visit. She was short in stature, and rather stout; but still, she had such a kind old face that you could not help loving her. A warm woollen dress and a plain white cap was her usual dress indoors, including a small scarlet shawl over her shoulders and bright knitted mittens on her hands. She had always a smile for everybody, and a kind

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word went with it; while her beaming grey eyes were full of love. Some time after, when grandmother was refreshed and rested, she went to walk in the garden with her grandchildren. She was delighted to see how well the flowers were getting on, and praised the neatness of the garden.

'How sweet these violets smell!' she said.

'Would you like some?' asked Jessy.

'No, not now, deary, but I should like a bunch to take home with me.'

'Yes, you shall have it, and this big purple one shall be amongst them;' so saying the little girl pointed to me.

After a short time, the grandmother went into the cottage, and the merry children with her. The next morning the sun rose in all his glory, and the day promised to be a fine one. Mrs. Mendall intended to leave in the forenoon, and before the sun had dried the dew the little children came running into the garden to gather the promised bunch of violets for her.

'We must have this one, it is such a beauty; look, Charley, what a deep purple, and how fresh it is with the dew on it!' said the elder girl.

At the same moment she gathered me, and put me in her basket with a number of my companions. Then the children ran back to the cottage, and we were all put in water to wait till their grandmother was ready to start. Very soon the old lady, wrapped in a large cloak and black bonnet, said good-bye to her daughter and grandchildren, and got into the low cart.

We were gently clasped in her hand, with cool moss round to keep us fresh, and then we fairly started. All that day we were travelling, and it was evening when the horse was stopped in front of a large house. By the flickering light of the lamp near, you could see on the brass plate on the door 'Dr. Hudson.' Here old Mrs. Mendall, who was housekeeper, got out, and with her bundle of things in one hand, and her bunch of violets in the other, she ascended the stone steps. A young servant, in a white muslin apron and cap trimmed with smart blue ribbons, opened the door and took the old lady's bundle from her, and also my companions and myself. We passed through a large hall,—it was so fine that I hardly dare lift up my purple head and look at it.

At last we were put in a glass filled with water, and carried into the housekeeper's room. Oh, how refreshing the cool water was after our long journey with the hot sun striking his beams on us! We were hanging down our heads with dust and fatigue, but the water soon revived us. The room we were in was a cheerful one. The wall was covered with a bright, cheerful paper, and there was a pretty carpet on the floor. A few coloured pictures were hanging on the wall, and by the bright blazing fire was Mrs. Mendall's arm-chair. But I was very weary, and it was late for me to be awake; so I closed my eyelids and went to sleep.

The next morning when I awoke, I found that we were placed on a table in the centre of the room. Everything looked very pleasant. A pretty canary was singing merrily in its cage, and every now and then the yellow songster stopped his song and pecked at some fresh groundsel. As the clock that was hanging on the wall struck eight, the old lady entered the room and sat down at the table to her breakfast of hot-buttered toast and eggs. When the plates were nearly empty, a little girl ran into the room, crying out,—

'Oh, Mrs. Mendall, I am so glad you have come home. Do you know I have been so busy while you were away. I cleaned dickey's cage, and watered your plants before breakfast, and did a number of other things. Oh, what lovely violets! did you bring them from Ivy Cottage?' she added, as her eye lighted on us, and she inhaled our sweet perfume.

'Yes, dear: would you like to have them?'

'Oh, Mrs. Mendall, indeed I would; may I really have them?' exclaimed little Edith.

'Yes, deary, and welcome; I am sure I will be very glad to give them to you.'

'Oh, how kind you are!' cried Edith, hugging and kissing the old lady. Then the little girl took us and ran to show us to her mother and brother.

'What a large bunch, Edie! don't you

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The Cottage in the Garden.

think that your little sick friend, Mabel Bell, would like half of it?' said Mrs. Hudson, as her daughter told her that Mrs. Mendall gave them to her, and that they had been brought all the way from Ivy Cottage.

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Esther and Mabel.

'Oh, yes, mother: what a good thought! May I go now and give them?' said Edie.

'Have you finished learning your lesson, dear?' asked her mother.

'No, not yet.'

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'Well, then, sit down in the schoolroom and do it, and when it is learned you may take your violets to Mabel Bell.'

Edie took up her books and went into the schoolroom with rather a discontented look. However, the lesson was finished in due time, and when it had been said to her governess, Edie ran upstairs and soon returned ready dressed to go out. First she divided us into two bunches, and I was in the one she took with her to her friend. She tripped merrily on her way, and it was not long before she reached Mabel's home. You would have been pleased to have seen the face of little Mabel when we were put in her hand. She was only seven years old, and could hardly believe we were all her own until Edith assured her it was the case. We were placed in a pretty pink vase in the drawing-room, where we were delighted to send forth our sweet perfume. Mabel was an affectionate little girl. Ever since she could remember she had often had bad, wearisome headaches, which made her feel cross and peevish; but when she was well there was not a more good-natured child. Her mother knew who it was that placed her work ready on the table for her every morning after breakfast, and who poked the fire and made the room look cheerful and cosy when she came in tired from her shopping; and Mabel, by such little acts of kindness, endeared herself to every one around her, and there was no one in the village who had not a pleasant smile or word as Mabel passed by.

But violets will not live for ever, and we were beginning to hang down our heads and look withered, as flowers do after a few days. The next morning Mabel forgot to give us any water, and when she entered the drawing-room, and her eye caught us, 'we were all done for,' as she said, and were sent down to the kitchen to be thrown away.

Thus ends my four days' life, and though only a humble little violet still, I was of some use, for did I not afford pleasure to more than one little child?

Children, cannot you learn a lesson from this lowly little flower?

PRETTY OR GOOD?

I AM glad Flora is growing a pretty child,' said Aunt Patty; 'I like children to be good looking.' Aunt Patty was an old lady, and rather deaf; so she always spoke loud herself; and Flora, who had only just left the room, was young and quick-eared. So, of course, she heard the remark, and scampered straight upstairs into her mother's room to look in the large glass, and twist a lock of hair round her fingers, saying to herself—'Yes, I thought so; I am pretty—Aunt Patty says so; and mother says she always tells the truth; and Martha, who is Aunt Patty's own godchild, isn't pretty a bit, I know.' And Flora twisted her hair, and stroked her pinafore, and smoothed down her blue ribbons, and thought how superior she was to her elder sister Martha.

Meantime, she did not hear her mother say to Aunt Patty,—

'That foolish little puss will have heard you, Aunt Patty.'

'Well, what then?' said Aunt Patty: 'she doesn't think she made herself, I suppose; and I never say black is white.'

When Flora came down again, she looked at Aunt Patty, and then at the floor, and smiled and blushed; and at last came and stood near her aunt.

'What's the matter with the child?' said Aunt Patty. 'Have you been at the green gooseberries again?'

This made Flora blush, and look very cross. She had only meant to show Aunt Patty that she had been quite right in saying that Flora Mayor was a pretty child.

'There, dear,' said her mother, 'don't stand looking so foolish; take your foot off Aunt Patty's gown, and go into the garden and have a good romp with Martha.'

Flora went rather unwillingly; despite Aunt Patty's awkward remarks, she would have liked to have stayed a little longer on the chance of being admired again.

But she knew she must obey her mother.

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Martha ran to meet her—a rosy, round-faced girl of ten, with straight brown hair; Flora's was wavy and golden.

'Come along. Flo, Flo, we want you to play at horses; what are you looking at? Have I a yellow nose and chin? Philip has been ducking them in buttercups.'

But no! Flora was only thinking what a common-looking girl her sister was.

Aunt Patty's remark had done her harm at present, certainly; it would remain to be proved if, as Aunt Patty always said, to know the truth could do no harm in the end.

Flora would not play with her brother and sister, but chose to walk along the quietest path in the garden, making up a story about herself how some lady should stop in the street and ask who that beautiful little girl was, and then wish to adopt her, and how she would drive off in a carriage and pair while Martha stayed at home. The only worry was, that in their quiet little village no strange fine lady ever did come.

A few days after these silly fancies of Flora's, Aunt Patty fell ill, and the doctor advised her to go to the seaside. Aunt Patty needed quiet, and strengthening air; and neither were to be had in their village, for it lay low among meadows; and as to quiet, Aunt Patty *would* totter down into the family sitting-room, where the children were always chattering and fidgeting.

'I must take one of the girls with me, then,' said Aunt Patty, when her seaside visit was talked of. Martha thought, 'Will it be me? I am her godchild.'

Flora said to herself, 'Aunt Patty will like to have the pretty one with her, and then I may meet the fine lady: who knows?' But nothing more was heard till next morning, when Aunt Patty came down looking quite brisk again, and said,—

'Now, Martha child, quick, go and help your mother to pack up, I am going to take you to the sea with me.'

Then Martha flushed with joy, while Flora choked once or twice, and then burst into a flood of tears.

'Heyday,' said Aunt Patty, 'what's the matter now?'

'I thought—I thought,' sobbed poor Flora, 'that you would have taken me with you.'

'And why should you go before Martha?' asked Aunt Patty, rather sharply.

'Because—because,' gasped Flora, 'you said—you said—you know you did——'

'What, child?' asked Aunt Patty, quite puzzled.

'You said you liked pretty, I mean good-looking children, and Martha isn't——'

'Little goose!' said Aunt Patty, 'I do like children to be good-looking and pretty, if it pleases God to make them so; but when I want a companion, I take a sensible, thoughtful girl, who does not waste her time at the looking-glass, but who can think what will best please a sick, cross old lady. There, stop crying, and listen to me. Who made mother late for church last Sunday, and then came down with a shiny dab of grease on her yellow hair, eh! plastering it down to try and look fine in God's house? And who broke her father's watch chain putting it on as a necklace? And who spoilt her best frock, wearing it when mother never told her to, last Thursday? Supposing I took you with me, you would be thinking so much of your clothes and your pretty face, that poor old Aunt Patty would be forgotten. No, no, I must take Martha, that's certain.'

Now, I daresay you think Aunt Patty rather a cruel old lady to say all this, but she did not mean to be so, she only wished to put little Flora's head straight.

But when she had done she felt rather tired, and tottered up to her bed-room, where Flora's mother went to her.

When the door was shut, Aunt Patty said, 'Yes, dear, I'll lie down, I want to tell you about Flora; it seems I did turn the lassie's head with praising her looks, and now she's sobbing her heart out because I have not chosen her to go with me. I'm not one generally to spoil children, but I ought to mend what I mar: so pack up both the children's clothes, I shall give them both a fortnight at the sea; and if the breezes there don't blow all the nonsense out of Flora's head before we come back my name isn't Patty Pulton.'

So Martha and Flora both went with Aunt Patty and enjoyed themselves greatly,

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'I am pretty.'

and Flora tried hard to forget she was pretty, and to be good and unselfish like Martha, for she soon found out that one likes to look at pretty children, but unless they have a great deal more to recommend them, one does not at all care to have them as companions.

H. A. F.

*** *All the back Numbers may be had, price One Penny each.*

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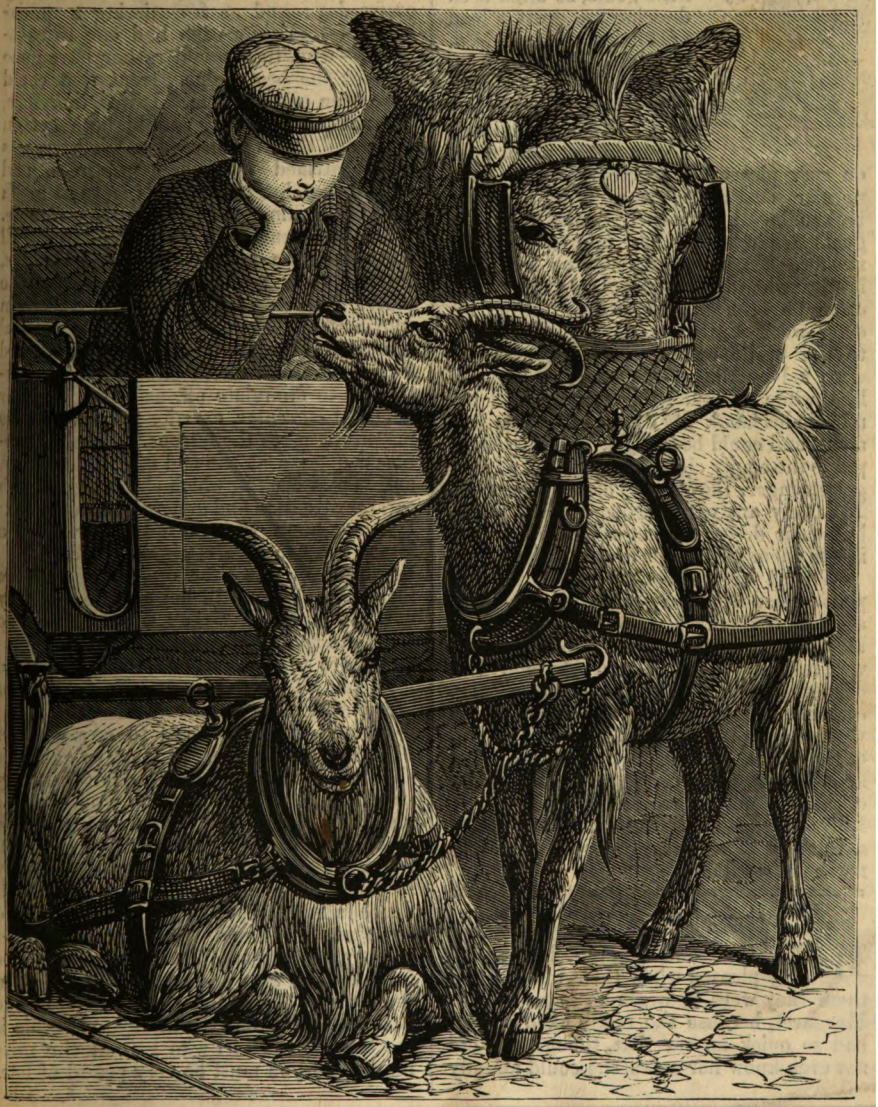
THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VII.] JULY, 1871. [One Penny.



The Goat-Chaise, by F. W. KEYL.

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THE GOAT-CHAISE.

LONG ago reminded our little friends in *The Prize* not to forget that the little goats, so often seen drawing too great a load of chaise and children, should be more kindly treated. We may rejoice in the fact, that the boy and his sturdy animals shown in the picture get on very pleasantly together. They have regular customers, who bring lots of broken bread from their homes; and the goats are well fed and housed by their master. They were trained by his elder brother when they were young. He might often be seen in the twilight, after his day's work was done, getting them used to the bridle and harness. First they were led by the younger boy, or followed him, while the elder one merely held the reins in his hand. By degrees they marched alone, and could be guided; then they were put to the empty chaise; and at last, as they got stronger, they had to drag a light load. Now they are very perfect in their work; but their driver will not allow anybody to ill-use them for fun, or in any other way.

When I was a schoolboy, one of my companions had a Nanny-goat, which was quite as well trained. By-and-bye one of her kids grew into a splendid he-goat. He was very tall, and we could even ride him. But our great pleasure was to see him jump over bits of cord, stretched across the yard, we running at his side. He learned several other tricks, and, as my friend's father kept horses, Billy fared sumptuously out of the well-filled corn-bin. What pleasures Billy added to our half-holidays! and I am happy to think he enjoyed himself as much as we did.

THE MUSIC PRIZE.

MARGARET and Janey Bell were both very pleased when their mother told them they were to begin to learn music: Margaret, because she really liked it, and had so quick an ear that, though she did not even know her notes, she could already pick out little tunes on the piano; and Janey, because she wished to be clever, and to know everything that other girls knew.

So they both took great pains, and were very industrious: they practised regularly every day; and as for missing a music-lesson,—and they each had one twice a-week,—why, they would rather have gone without the best holiday-treat that could have been offered them. It was, therefore, but natural that they should both get on well; and their teacher, Mrs. Webster, was quite satisfied with their progress, and wished that her other pupils were as much bent on learning, and gave as little trouble.

The different little girls she taught all met at her house on Tuesdays and Fridays, to take their lessons in turn; while the others were employed in the same room in copying out music and learning musical catechisms, and so on. This plan served to encourage a wholesome spirit of emulation; to stimulate all, as Mrs. Webster hoped, to greater exertions; and to give more interest to the lessons. She had promised a prize at the end of the first year, and kept a book in which she marked each girl for attention and general improvement; but any pupil who stayed away from a lesson lost her good mark for the day.

Christmas was drawing near, and the little Bells anxiously hoped, though they did not know, that they were behind no one as to the number of their good marks: they were not sure which of the two stood first, but they made a pretty fair guess that one of them would win the prize.

Now it would be hard to say whether Margaret or Janey cared most to gain this sign of honour. Margaret desired it very much, because she knew it would please her parents, and prove to them that she had tried to deserve their kindness in letting her learn music. Janey had not nearly so good a reason. She had plenty of confidence in her own powers, and never doubted but that she should win praise from her teacher and parents; but she wished praise from others, too: she longed to shine in the eyes of her young companions, and to hear her mother's friends say, 'So this is the clever little girl who gained the prize for music! you must be very proud of her.'

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The week before the holidays came at length, and brought with it so severe a cold for Janey that her mother thought it wise to keep her altogether in the house. This was a great trial to the poor child, for she was thus obliged to lose her two last music-lessons; and, she feared also, her chance of the prize.

'Only,' she said, by way of consoling herself, and without much regard for her sister's feelings, 'I dare say after all, Margaret, that I am a good deal before you as well as the others: so two marks won't make any great difference.'

'That is just what I think,' replied modest little Margaret, in perfect good faith and good humour.

But the result was not so. When Mrs. Webster counted up her register, the sisters were found to stand almost on an equality as to marks up to the time of Janey's enforced absence from her lessons. Margaret, indeed, was in advance by one: and the two extra marks she had obtained during the last week threw the balance altogether in her favour. Her heart bounded with delight for a moment as the announcement was made; then she thought of Janey's disappointment, and could feel no more pleasure in her own success.

'Please, ma'am,' she asked timidly, but with eager earnestness, 'mayn't Janey and I have the prize between us? You see she couldn't help not coming these two last times, so she deserves it as much as I do.'

'That is against my rule,' Mrs. Webster answered. 'Besides, you have a *third* mark over, you know.'

'But you would not give me the prize for only *one* mark: I don't think I should like it for only one. So I may tell Janey, mayn't I,' pleaded Margaret, 'that the prize is half hers?'

'Well, if you really wish it,' said Mrs. Webster, unwilling to refuse so amiable a request.

So Margaret ran home with a light step and a beaming face, and hastening to the room where Janey sat anxiously awaiting her return and the important news, she held out the prettily bound music-book, exclaiming,—

'We have both got it! we are to have the prize between us.'

'Then I should have been first if it had not been for this horrid cold,' said Janey, only half pleased. 'It's a little too bad, I think: still, I don't much care, as it's only you, dear. You see it was as we thought: I was nearly sure I must be before you.'

Margaret felt her spirits rather damped, and her feelings a little bit hurt, too: but she explained nothing and let the matter pass, for she would have been ashamed to tell of her own generous act. It had been done out of pure love to her sister, and not for the sake of thanks and praise. And, after all, it is nearly always 'more blessed to give than to receive.'

And some time afterwards, when Janey learned the facts of the case from Mrs. Webster, and in admiring love for her sister, and shame for her own conceit, threw her arms round Margaret's neck, saying, 'Oh, how good you are, darling! how I wish I were more like you!' our little heroine thought she had won something better than even the Music Prize.

BLUE GRASS.

DID you ever go to look for blue grass? 'No,' you say; 'who could be so silly? We know grass is always green.'

But there was a child who was once so silly, as you call it, as to go and look for blue grass. This was how it happened. All the children of a school in a big town had been taken out for their summer treat —a day in some beautiful woods,—where there were deep dells full of ferns and flowers, and here and there peeps to be seen through the trees of distant hills. And as, perhaps, you know, when hills are seen afar off in some lights, they seem to be quite blue.

There was one little girl in this school who had never been so far into the country before; and she was full of glee, gathering the ferns and the flowers, some of which she twined round her straw hat, while she called some long feathery fern-leaves her new parasol, though there was not much sunshine under those shady trees.

This little girl was so eager after her

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The Music Lesson.

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ferns that she wandered away from all her companions—never thinking about them: and as she was rambling along, with her eager eyes looking for pretty sprays of fern or bright flowers, she came to an opening in the wood, and, looking across, she saw in the distance what she thought were fields of blue grass, and off

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she set, without saying anything to her teachers or companions, to gather some of the strange blue grass.

But when she had run a long way, she caught another glimpse of the hills that she was going to, and, now, lo and behold! the grass was not blue after all, but as green as the grass she was walking upon. And then the little girl turned back, and found she was very weary and footsore; and as she got into the deep wood again, she did not know which of the many green paths to take: and you cannot wonder to see the big tears in her eyes when you remember that the evening was coming on, and that she thought, perhaps, the vans might have gone home, and she never been missed, and that she would have to sleep, like the babes in the wood, at the foot of a tree, with only fern-leaves to cover her, instead of in her own cosy bed at home.

However, it was not so bad as that. Her kind teacher had missed her, and came to search for her, and found her, and took her safely to the other children, who laughed very much at her for running away after blue grass.

Our little readers say, 'What a little goose she must have been! How silly to run after blue grass!' But take care; are there none of you running after things which you think look very pleasant afar off, but which, when you really get hold of them, you will find to be no better than blue grass—very different really from what they seemed to be at a distance? Are there no little boys who say now and then, 'Oh! when I'm a man I won't bother with any lessons, but I'll always do just what I like?' Are there no little girls who say, 'When I'm grown up I'll wear my best ribbons every day, and not be always running errands or busy in the house; but I'll please myself all day long and always, and then I'll be as happy as can be?'

Any boy or girl who talks or thinks like this is quite as silly as the child who ran after blue grass; for if you had to-morrow morning what you wish, by the evening you would find it was not at all like what you expected, and most likely you would not be half as happy as you are to-day.

J. E. C.

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

FROM the stories of six damsels mentioned in the Old Testament we pass now to some in the New Testament; and, first, to the daughter of Jairus. (St. Matt. ix. 18, 19, 23–26; St. Mark, v. 22–24, 35–43; and St. Luke, viii. 41, 42, 49–56.)

It would seem that this maiden's home was Capernaum, a busy town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. As her father was a ruler of the synagogue, that is, a manager of its affairs, and a keeper of the copy of the Jewish Scriptures—which every synagogue possessed—he must have been a rabbi or teacher, and therefore a person of some importance in Capernaum. On the Sabbath-day the little girl, we may well suppose, went to the synagogue with her parents. She and her mother would be in the women's part of the congregation, which was divided from the men's side by a screen, five or six feet high; and during part of the service Jairus would occupy the place from whence it was his duty to read the appointed prayers.

Perhaps the little girl had been present, as no doubt Jairus was, one morning when the Lord Jesus Himself was there, and when He not only taught the people so wonderfully that *they were astonished at His doctrine* (St. Luke, iv. 31–37), but also worked a miracle, by casting an evil spirit out of a poor afflicted man, who was in the congregation.

Soon there came a time when the ruler, recollecting this and other mighty works done in Capernaum, went to Jesus to help him, because all other help was vain. The maiden, *his one only daughter*, then *about twelve years of age, fell sick, and lay a-dying*. Jairus therefore hastened to our Blessed Lord, *and when he saw Him he fell at His feet, and besought Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death; I pray Thee come*

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and lay Thy hands on her that she may be healed; and she shall live.

Though Jesus could have cured the dying child by a word, as He had healed the centurion's servant (St. Matt. viii. 5–13), He went with Jairus towards his house, followed by the disciples and a crowd of people, all eager to see what He would do. On His way He worked another miracle, by healing a woman who had been afflicted with illness for twelve years,—just as long a period as the whole life of the ruler's little daughter. The delay must have been a heavy trial to the father's faith, and he soon saw that what he most dreaded had already happened. The damsel's spirit had fled from her body, which now lay cold and motionless upon the bed. Her poor mother had sent messengers to Jairus with the mournful tidings, and while Jesus was still speaking to the woman whom He had healed, the men met the ruler, saying to him, *Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?* Without giving the father time to doubt His power and His love, Jesus said, *Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole;* for where there was no faith the Lord could work no miracle.

On arriving at the house there was heard a great tumult, caused by the moaning and lamentation of the mourners, and by the noise of the minstrels, who were hired to add their doleful strains to the cries of sorrow. But Jesus said, *Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth! and they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.* How are we to understand these two verses (St. Luke, viii. 52, 53)? Surely they mean, that while to her parents and friends, and to all the world besides, she was really dead, yet to Jesus, Who is the Resurrection and the Life, she was only asleep, and waiting for His voice to bid her awaken again.

After sending away these scorners, who were unfit to behold what He was about to do, Jesus, accompanied only by the maiden's father and mother, and His three disciples, St. Peter and St. James and St. John, went into the chamber, and taking hold of the child's cold hand, He said, in the Syriac language, '*Talitha cumi!*' *Talitha* was a word of endearment used in speaking to a little maiden; and the two words mean, 'Rise, my child!' or, 'My child, get up!' being just such words as a tender mother would use when calling her daughter to awake and arise from her bed after a night's sleep.

At the sound of the Lord's voice the dead child's spirit came again into her body, so that she not only arose from the bed, but also walked about the room. *And her parents were astonished with a great astonishment.* To convince them that her daughter was well again as well as alive, Jesus *commanded that something should be given her to eat,* because she needed food to support her newly-given life, and this her parents might have forgotten in the joy and surprise of the moment. What a wonderful proof this is of our Saviour's love! He whose mighty power had just called back a soul from Paradise to earth, was now caring about and providing for the hunger of a little child. The crowd outside quickly spread the tidings of what Jesus had done, and, as St. Matthew tells us, *the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.*

When we fall asleep in Jesus there will be no awakening for our bodies until the resurrection morning, when His voice will bid us arise from our graves. To that time let us turn our thoughts whenever we read in the Gospels of our Lord's raising the dead to life. Only let us love and serve, and trust Him now, and then at the resurrection He will give us life for evermore in the Home that He has prepared for us in Heaven!

JENNY, THE LITTLE THIEF.

(*Continued from page* 85.)

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning the three children met again on the beach, and Willie got his first lesson in shrimping. When they had been hard at work for about an hour, Mrs. Scott came down in her donkey-chair, with the younger children and nurse, and called Barbara to come and bathe with them.

'I shall go on shrimping with Jenny, whilst you are bathing,' said Willie, 'and

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'Rise, my child.'

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you'll see what a lot we shall catch by the time you come back.'

There were no bathing-machines at North Pier, so the visitors used to make dressing-rooms for themselves of the caverns and recesses amongst the rocks.

'Mother, may we go on to the Needle-rocks and bathe to-day?' asked Barbara: 'there are some lovely pools there now, and such good places for dressing in.'

'My dear child, they are some way on, and I am afraid of the weather.'

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'Oh, mother, I am sure it is not going to rain yet, and next week the tide won't do for going on so far—do say "yes."'

'Well then, dear, we must make haste.'

So the children hurried on and secured a snug little semi-circular dressing-place under a high cliff.

'And now, mother, if you will let Peter stand across the entrance, so, we shall be quite shut in,' said Barbara.

'Very well, I daresay he will stand there quite quiet,' said Mrs. Scott, 'and I shall take my book and sit down a little way off, where I can watch you when you are in the pools.'

Just then Jenny came up, having left Willie behind, and she offered to stand by Peter whilst they were bathing. Her offer was accepted, and she gained credit for being an obliging child; but her motives, as we shall presently see, were far from being good ones.

As soon as the children were undressed and had run round to the pools, which were hidden by some high rocks, Jenny fastened Peter's reins, so that he could not run away, and then, looking stealthily around to see that no one was watching her, she began to search amongst the children's clothes for something which had excited her admiration on the previous day, and which she thought she should like to take for herself. It was a small red cornelian stone cut in the shape of a heart, which Barbara always wore round her neck, and which she prized more than anything else in her possession. Her mother had given it her when she was a very little girl, and ever since she had worn it daily, although when they came to North Pier her mother had warned her of the danger of losing it amongst the rocks when bathing.

Jenny could not find it for some time, for Barbara always took care to hide her treasure in some safe place; but at length Jenny found it, and clutching it eagerly, she passed the cord, to which it was attached, round her neck, and carefully tucked the stone inside her frock, out of sight.

She then peeped quietly round the rocks, to make sure that none of the children had watched her, but seeing them still sporting in the pools she returned to her deserted post at Peter's head, where she stood as demurely as possible, looking as though she had never stirred from the spot.

But she had not yet finished her work of deceit. She knew that, when the heart was missing, she would be suspected of having stolen it. What should she do? Should she run away? But no, if she did that she should be afraid of ever being seen by any of them again. She was thinking what to do, when she saw a man with an old sack on his shoulders, and a rusty knife in his hand, picking mussels from the rocks not far off. Her mind was quickly made up. Leaving Peter again, she went round the rocks to where Mrs. Scott was seated with her book: 'Lady, d'ye see that ugly-looking man over there on the rocks?'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Scott, looking round, 'I see him; but he won't hurt us, I suppose—he is only picking mussels.'

'Iss, but I see'd him peering about in there where the children's clothes is, and I thought p'raps he might have took off something.'

'But, Jenny, if you were standing there by the donkey, he could not have taken anything without your seeing it,' replied Mrs. Scott.

'No, I knows that,' said Jenny, hanging her head, and looking out sheepishly under her long eyelashes, 'but the donkey was standing so quiet, I thought I needn't watch him all the time, so I was looking away at them boats for a bit, and when I turned round again I saw the man just walking away from the rock, so I thought I'd just come round and tell 'ee of it.'

At this Mrs. Scott was rather frightened and hastened round to see if she could discover anything missing; but no, everything was safe, so, telling Jenny to keep a better watch over them than she had done, she returned to her seat. Jenny did not know, for she had never been taught, that the eye of an All-seeing God had been upon her. She had never learnt that little verse which we should all do well to remember oftener than we do, 'Thou God seest me.' As it turned out, however, this piece of deceit on Jenny's part was not necessary.

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CHAPTER IV.

MEANWHILE the heavy clouds had grown still more threatening, and large drops of rain began to fall. Mrs. Scott called to the children to come out of the water at once and be dressed, as they must hurry home, or at least get to some place of shelter. Before the dressing could be completed, however, down came the rain, and they crept for shelter as close as they could under that cliff which was rather overhanging just in that place, for they had come without umbrellas. They had been in this position for several minutes, when some loose stones came rattling down just over their heads. They were rather frightened, and thought that some one on the top of the cliff must have thrown them down; but in another minute down came a quantity of rubbish, loosened by the rain, and lodged at their feet. They all rushed out of their hiding-place into the pouring rain, thinking that the cliff was going to fall on them!

'Quick, children, pick up your things, and get home as fast as you can; we must not stay here,' exclaimed Mrs. Scott.

They hastily snatched up their things; and some with bare feet, some with bare heads, and others without a jacket, set off to run homewards. Willie and Jenny attended Mrs. Scott in the donkey-chair, and did their best to hurry Peter along. He was willing enough to go at first, and, bending down his head, he galloped along as though he thought he had an unpleasant task to perform, and the sooner he got it over the better; but when they arrived at the stream, which was rather increased by the rain, he came to a dead stand, and nothing would tempt him to go on. In vain they coaxed, and dragged, and pushed him, he had made up his mind not to cross it; and a donkey's mind, when once made up, is not easily changed. But, happily, Mr. Burt, who had been out taking a walk on the beach, seeing the helpless condition of the lady and children, came to the rescue.

'Allow me to try, madam, if I can get your donkey over the stream,' he said, addressing Mrs. Scott in a dignified manner; 'he seems to have a will of his own like most of his race. Now, young gentleman, if you will take him by the head, I will push the chair on his heels from behind, and then I think he must go on.'

This plan succeeded, and they soon found themselves across the stream. Mrs. Scott thanked Mr. Burt for his kindness, and they hastened on as fast as they could. Jenny, I must tell you, vanished as soon as Mr. Burt appeared on the scene, thinking it best, no doubt, to make herself scarce. By the time they reached home they were in a sad plight, as you may suppose, dripping from head to foot.

In the midst of all this flight and confusion Barbara had not missed her precious treasure, and it was not until she was going to bed that night that she discovered her loss.

'Oh, nurse,' she exclaimed, 'I have lost my dear little heart. I must have left it on the rocks this morning, and now it is washed away by the sea, and I shall never see it again! O nurse, what *shall* I do?'

But nurse was not in a mood to comfort her.

'Well, Miss Barbara, it serves you right for wearing it when you went down to bathe; I always told you you'd lose it one of these days, and now you've done it.'

'I shall put on my things and go down and look for it now,' said Barbara, making a bold venture, although in her heart she knew it would be in vain.

'Indeed, Miss Barbara, you'll do nothing of the kind at this time of night. Go to bed at once, and don't go breaking your heart for such a little thing as that; to-morrow morning is plenty of time to look for it, and besides the tide is in now.' So poor Barbara was obliged unwillingly to obey.

The first thing the next morning she went down to look for it, and searched in the very little hole where she had hidden it; but it was not to be found, and she sorrowfully returned, believing that the waves had swallowed up her treasure.

Jenny, meanwhile, was rejoicing in the possession of it, and flattering herself that her guilt would never be discovered.

(*To be continued.*)

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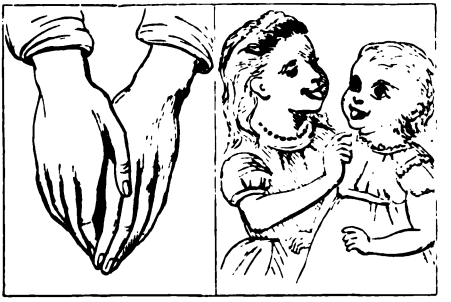


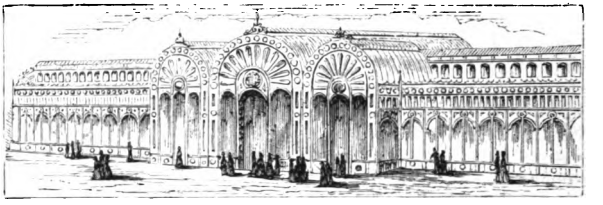
HANDS AND TONGUES;

OR, THIS PICTURE AND THAT.

OF all the wondrous tools there are
The hand 's most wonderful by far.
The hand and tongue are talents given,
For which we owe account to Heaven.

Gentle and useful, kind, honest, and true,
Is that such a hand as belongs unto you.'
Is yours wicked and quarrelsome, cruel and rough?

Of hands of that sort we have more than enough.
In kind, gentle chatter these tongues are engaged;
With wild, cruel laughter this battle is waged.
Which hands and which tongues are the happiest, say,
These here at such work, or those there at such play.



THE EXHIBITION.

Patient toil and wondrous skill
Did the Exhibition fill
With wonders of the head and hand,
Collected there from every land.
Who can tell?—perhaps *you* may
Make quite as good yourselves one day!

This wondrous hand is now a tongue,
Speech giving to the deaf and dumb!
Another marvel too we find,

For eyes it giveth to the blind!
By *it* they read, by *it* they write,
In brightest day or darkest night.

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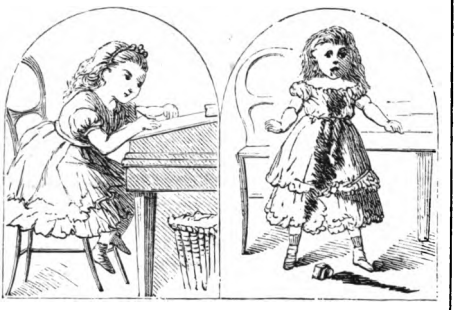
The dentist's no foe, but a friend in disguise;
You'll quickly go seek him, dear, if you are wise.
He may hurt you, it's true, but that pain is soon gone,
And then, like this boy, you'll go bounding along.
That surely is better than sitting all day,
Unable to eat and unable to play,

With a cheek swollen up, and a face full of pain,
And feeling as though you could ne'er smile again.
Now, thanks to the dentist's hand, happy you feel;
What comfort it brought with its bit of bright steel!

Tom and Charles went to see a cathedral most grand,
And Tom you see leaving some alms with his hand.
Charles, wishing to bear the cathedral in mind,
Takes the nose of the best statuette he can find.
O barbarous hand, thus to spoil and destroy!
Pray never resemble this mischievous boy!



Ink is most useful when used with discretion,
But you'll hardly admire little Missey's expression!
She was dressed in her best for a party at tea;
But what's in the inkstand she wanted to see.
So her meddlesome hands pulled it down on her head,
And instead of to tea she was sent up to bed!

BIRD'S-NESTING.

If nests must be sought, and if eggs must be had,
Will you one thing remember, my good little lad?
It is not the *nest*, but the eggs that you want.
You can cleverly count, but the mother bird can't.

So take what you like, if you only leave some,
And with bad, cruel hand, don't destroy her 'sweet home.'
But Ann enjoys feeding her flock of winged pets
More than Henry can do all the eggs that he gets.

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If you had been born with your hands
Brown or black,
You might still be a very good boy,
Master Jack.
But hands that with dirt
Are the colour of pitch
Are fit to be only with pigs
In a ditch!

First an angry word was said;
Next, of course, came angry deed.
Tongue and *hand*, you're both to blame
What a way to end a game!
Naughty *heart*, I fear 'twas you
Who first urged on this sad 'set to.'
Quickly now confess the wrong,
Heart and *hand* and foolish *tongue*.

Let us play at 'Pack of hands.'
Listen all to my commands.
The lowest hand still mounts the top—
On, on for ever, never stop,
Till some one's tired, then you may
Pat all at once, and run away.'

So that's the way you use your strength!
Tired of lying in bed at length.
'Twere better far, my boy, indeed,
At once your nurse's word to heed.
Your angry hand can break the bell—
Father's can use a rod as well!

Patting, petting, and caressing,
Mother, dear, you love her so;
At least as much as you love her
She is loving you, you know!

When little hands have naughty been,
There 's a sight that 's often seen!
Another patting here goes on:
A very naughty boy was John! J. E. C. F.

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AN ESCAPE.

From the French.

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy named Francis; he lived in a town in England, on the edge of a great wood.

The wood was a lovely place, especially in summer, for a great many flowers grew there. it was the home of all the birds, and the favourite playground of the little squirrels.

Francis was very fond of the birds, the flowers, and the merry squirrels, and often went to the wood on a holiday. One particular Saturday in summer he went to the wood with a basket, which he promised his little sister Mary to bring back full of wood-strawberries.

He had to walk some way in the wood before he found the strawberries, which grew thickly on a sunny bank in a clearing.

When the basket was full, and he had eaten a few strawberries himself, he took out a story-book and began to read. The story amused him so much, that he never noticed how the clouds had gathered over the blue sky till two or three great drops of rain fell on his hand. Then he jumped up, and thrusting the story into his pocket, ran as hard as he could towards home.

The rain fell heavily, and soon there came peals of thunder, which seemed to be just over the little boy's head. A good deal frightened, he crept to an old hollow oak and squeezed himself inside. Once there, he thought he would wait till the storm ceased; and so he made himself as comfortable as he could in the narrow hollow.

He had hardly been there five minutes, when he heard his name called, 'Francis, Francis! come—come here—quick!

In a moment he sprang out from his shelter, and set off in the direction from which the voice came. He had only gone a few steps, when there came a louder clap of thunder, a more dazzling flash of lightning, followed by a crack just behind him; much terrified he looked back, and saw the oak all blackened and split, and no trace of the basket which he now remembered he had left hanging on a twig.

'What would have become of me if I had stayed there?' thought he, hurrying on. At a turning of the wood he saw a woman at the door of a cottage beckoning to him.

'Come in out of the rain,' said she; 'and now tell me who you are.'

'Why, you know,' said the boy, as he dried himself by the fire, 'you called me just now.'

'No,' she answered, 'it wasn't you I called, but my own boy—and here he comes.'

Francis told her his story, and the danger from which her call had saved him.

'You should thank God with all your heart,' said the good woman, as he ended the story, 'for it wasn't a chance that made me call your name just then, but God's mercy to you; don't forget that.'

'Indeed I won't,' said Francis; 'I hadn't thought of that.'

He walked quietly home when the rain stopped, thinking more gravely than ever he had thought before over all that had happened that afternoon.

When he got home, his mother and sister were watching for him.

'What did you do in the storm, Francis?' said his mother.

'Where's the basket?' said little Mary.

When he told them all that had happened to him, Mary forgot all about the basket, and his mother could hardly speak for crying.

At last she said, 'Francis, the woman was quite right; we must all thank God with our whole hearts. And, my boy, there is another thing I should like you to think of. When you grow up and go into the world, there will be many storms: your duty may often lie in the midst of them, and you will often be tempted to stand by in the shelter and leave your duty undone: do you remember this storm then. If you had not obeyed the woman's call, and run out of your shelter in obedience to it, what would have become of you? So you will find, when your duty calls you, though it seems to be straight out into the storm, that only in obeying the call will you be safe.'

The words were said at the right moment, and Francis never forgot them; but often and often, as he grew older, they would come back to him in moments of

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'He crept to an old hollow oak.' P. 111.

difficulty, and he would say to himself, 'Where God calls me it must be safe to go.'

Francis is a man now, he has worked hard, and is a rich as well as a good man, and would tell you that the great help of his life has been those words of his mother's.

In his room hangs a cross, made of oak, charred in parts. His mother had it made for him at his Confirmation.

I need only say that the woman whose call saved his life, is well cared for, and the other Francis also.

L. P.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VIII.] AUGUST, 1871. [One Penny.

'Two Years Old.

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TWO YEARS OLD.

OH! little, rare, and radiant face,
That smilest up to God,
The flowers of life seem lovelier where
Thy tiny feet have trod!
I never thought so wee a thing
So large a joy could bring;
I never pictured so much bliss
Could bless Love's fairy ring;
For never was a spot so charmed
By spell of elf or fairy,
As our fond hearts and happy home
By little Katie Mary.

So beautiful, so wonderful,
Her little ways unfold,
I almost wish she 'd always be
The pet of two years old;
For never did I think to life
Belonged delights so sweet,
Before I kissed her dimpled cheeks,
And heard her pattering feet.
Oh! then within Love's fairy ring
God guard this little Fairy,
And guardian angels hover close
Round darling Katie Mary.

Yea, bless! and may this bud of Hope
With angel-grace expand;
God! keep the haunting terror off
Of Death's remorseless hand.
Oh! Thou who lovest us to feel
Thou hast a Father's heart,
Grant that our souls be spared the pang
With so much joy to part.
And as with innocence divine
Smiles now our infant Fairy,
With soul as pure in womanhood
May bloom our Katie Mary.

ROWLAND BROWN.

THE BIRTHDAY WREATH.

'TO-MORROW is Aunt Carrie's birthday, mother,' said little Edith Ray, one evening, 'and I have come to ask if you will please give us a whole holiday?'

'Yes, my dear,' replied Mrs. Ray, 'I had been thinking of doing so: it would be too bad to keep Etta in school on such a day.'

'Etta says she has never been away from her mother on her birthday before,' said Edith, 'I am sure we will do all we can to make this one pass happily for her.'

'I hope so, my child,' answered her mother, 'and if it is fine you shall spend the morning in the woods. Your father says they are quite dry now, and lovely with the flowers.'

'Oh, thank you,' cried Edith, clapping her hands, and away she ran to tell the news to her cousin and sister.

Etta Langford had been at her aunt's for nearly six months. Her own parents lived in India, but had brought her to England the year before, so that she might be educated with her cousins. Etta felt the parting very much, and at first fretted a good deal to think how long it would be before she could see her father and mother again. After a while, however, she began to see that it would be much better if she tried to be cheerful and happy, and let them have the comfort of knowing that their little girl was making good use of the time she was away from them.

Mrs. Ray was very fond of her niece, and was most kind to her, and she found pleasant companions in her cousins Clara and Edith.

The children were delighted to think of going in the wood, and directly they woke the next morning little Edith jumped out of bed to see if it were fine. The sun was shining brightly, and she pulled the blind on one side to show Etta and Clara what a lovely birthday Aunt Carrie was going to have.

A little after ten o'clock they started: the wood was very near the house, and in a few minutes they were fairly in it. For nearly two hours they rambled about, sometimes picking the flowers, and sometimes resting on an old stump, to look round and admire the beautiful carpet of bright green moss, mixed with primroses and the early purple orchis, which was spread under the trees.

At last they began to think what was to be done with their flowers when they got home. Etta said she should like to make a pretty wreath with hers, to hang over her mother's picture in the dining-room,

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and Clara and Edith decided that what they had gathered should be arranged in nosegays for the dinner-table, so that it should be gay and pretty in honour of Aunt Carrie.

As they crossed the stile which led from the wood, Edith proposed that she should run home for some string, and ask her mother if they might arrange their flowers out there.

While Clara was telling her where to find the string and a pair of scissors, Etta, who had been thinking very much all day of her dear mother, flung herself on the grass, and lay picturing the way she would be spending the day in her Indian home. She longed very much to be with her, and wished there were really such beings as the good fairies who are said to take little girls all sorts of long journeys in a few minutes. She thought she would have asked her fairy friend, if she had had one, to drop her down in her father's bungalow at Bombay.

Presently, however, she jumped up, saying to herself, 'It is no use dreaming so, I am sure my dear mother would not like me to do that. I will try and make the prettiest wreath I can, just as if she would really see it, and then I will write and tell her that I did it for love of her. After all, I am sure she knows how dearly I love her, just as I know how she loves me; and, perhaps, when I get older, I may find a way of doing something better for her.'

PRINCE AND HIS FRIENDS.

'MOTHER, mother,' called Charlie Lane, as he ran into the house one morning; 'there is such a jolly little dog outside, that a man wants to sell; may I buy it, please?'

'Buy a dog, my dear!' said his mother. 'What can have put that into your head? I don't know where you could keep it.'

'It might sleep in the kitchen, mother; might it not? I am sure I would look after it in the daytime. I'll promise you shall not be bothered with the little thing, if you will let me have it.'

Mrs. Lane smiled, but she did not remind Charlie that he was at school the greater part of the day, and so would not be able to take much care of the dog's good behaviour. She only said, 'I must see the dog, Charlie, before I can say anything about letting you buy it.'

'I am sure you will like it,' cried Charlie, as he hurried away; then turning back he added, 'It got hurt the other day, and needs taking care of; the man says he would not sell it, only he cannot nurse it properly, as he travels about the country.'

'Why did you not tell me that at first?' said his mother. 'Stop a minute; Charlie, Charlie!' she called, but Charlie started off again, and did not hear her.

Presently he returned, with a man carrying a little Skye terrier under his arm. Mrs. Lane saw them coming, and knew the man as a civil, honest fellow, who had travelled about that part of the country for many years: she went to the door, and he touched his hat, and said,—

'I've brought the dog, ma'am; the young gentleman told me you would like to have a look at it.'

'Thank you, my good man,' replied Mrs. Lane. 'I am sorry you have had the trouble, for I don't think I can buy it. My little boy forgot to say at first that the dog was hurt, or I should at once have refused to buy it.'

The man looked disappointed, but showed Mrs. Lane that the little animal was not seriously injured, and that it needed warmth and rest more than anything.

He travelled about with a cart selling crockery, and Prince (for that was the name of the little dog) used to run by his side, until, a few days before, as he was selling some things at a house, a quarrelsome dog set upon his little favourite, and bit him severely. The poor creature had crawled to the door where his master was standing, and laid itself down at his feet, moaning piteously.

The person to whom the big dog belonged was sorry when she saw what had happened, and made the man take Prince to the kitchen fire, where she washed his

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The Birth-day Wreath.

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Prince and his Friends.

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wounds, and gave him some warm milk to drink. She asked that the little dog might be left with her until its master came that way again, and promised to take the greatest care of it: but though the man thanked her, he could not feel happy in leaving his little dog so near the big one, and he said that he would make a bed for it in his cart, and that he hoped in a few days it would be all right again. The woman gave him an old basket, which she filled with straw, and for the rest of the day Prince lay still, and seemed perfectly content, so long as he had a word now and then from his master. As he began to recover it was more difficult to manage him, and Prince whined and barked so to be with his master again that once or twice he let him run a short distance, but he soon had to put him back into his bed again.

The ground at that time was covered with snow, and Prince suffered so much from the cold that his master saw that the best thing that he could do would be to try and find him a comfortable home somewhere, and thus he came to be at Mrs. Lane's door.

'You see, ma'am,' he said, 'it goes hard with me to part with him; and I don't know what my wife and the little ones will say when I get back and tell them what I have done. What I'm looking out for is a good home for the dog; and if you will take him, ma'am, you're quite welcome, for I'm sure you and the young gentleman here will be kind to him.'

After a good deal of persuading Mrs. Lane consented to take the dog; but his master refused to receive any money for him, only bargaining that he might always call and see him when he passed through the town.

'Good-bye, Prince,' he said. 'I shall be dull without you; but I've done it for the best. I'm sure I don't know what the old horse will do when he stops at night and has not got you to rub his nose against.'

Prince looked wistfully after his master, and was restless and dull for several days, but Charlie petted him so much that by the time he was able to run about again he would follow him anywhere. All the family made a fuss with him; and Freddy, Charlie's younger brother, was delighted when he was allowed to take him out for a walk.

As time went on the boys taught him a great many tricks, and among other things he learned to sit up on his hind legs, with a piece of bread on his nose, while they counted one, two, three, and then, as they called 'Snap,' he would toss the bread into the air, and catch it in his mouth as it came down. After this performance he used to wag his tail, and look almost as proud of himself as the boys were of him.

When his old master came Prince was always full of glee, and the first time he tried hard to go away with him. After that visit he seemed to understand that he was to be left behind, though he showed plainly he did not approve of the arrangement, and usually he went off to the basket that was his bed after the parting, and stayed there the rest of the day.

Rather more than a year after this Mrs. Lane told her two boys one day that their father had been offered an excellent situation in Spain, and that he had made up his mind to accept it.

'It is a good thing for us, my boys, in many ways,' she said; 'but I cannot feel as glad as I ought, because we shall be obliged to break up our happy home here: still we must try to bear the parting as bravely as we can.'

The boys looked grave, and were perfectly silent for some minutes; at last Charlie, who liked to make the best of everything, said,—

'Never mind, mother; very likely we shall get as good a house there; and perhaps, when we are used to it, we shall like it as well as this. We may have orange-trees in the garden, too, who knows? That would be first-rate; would it not, Freddy?'

Mrs. Lane was glad to see her boy trying to take things so cheerfully, but her voice trembled, as she explained that it would be necessary for him and his brother to remain behind in England until they were old enough to leave school; then, finding herself unable to restrain her tears, she kissed her two children and went out of the room.

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Charlie knelt down by a chair, and hid his face on his arm, while Freddy sat on the hearth-rug and sobbed aloud. Prince, who could not understand what was going on, looked puzzled, and at length, going up to Charlie, as if to inquire what was the matter, he licked the hand which hung by his side until his young master could no longer resist the doggie's attempts at comfort, but picked him up, and told him all his troubles.

When Mr. Lane came home to tea the boys were more cheerful, and could talk over their plans without showing any outward signs of grief. Mr. Lane told the boys he would often be in England on business, and that he had chosen a school for them near London, so that he might be able to see as much of them as possible during his visit.

That night Charlie lay awake a long while, wondering what would become of Prince, for he knew well enough that boys at school are not allowed to keep dogs. He asked his mother next morning whether Prince was going to Spain; but she said that could not be, and promised to find a home for him in England.

Before many days had passed the man with the crockery called to see his old friend; Prince, as usual, was delighted, and barked, and wagged his tail, to show how happy he felt.

Charlie told the man they were soon going to leave their house, and that they wished to find a good home for Prince, and asked whether he would like to have him again.

'Thank you, sir,' he replied, 'I should, indeed, if your mother is willing,—not that I can ever keep him as you've done; he looks quite a gentleman to what he did, running along the dirty roads with me; but I'll do my best for the dog you may depend, sir. I have always been sorry that I was obliged to part from him.'

Mrs. Lane was glad to have Prince so well and easily disposed of, and went to the pantry to find him something nice for his farewell dinner. They were all sorry to lose the little dog, and it seemed as if the boys would never have done kissing and hugging him. At last they said 'Good-bye,' and Prince once more took up his old quarters in the travelling-cart.

Not long afterwards the whole family went to London, and Charlie and Freddy were taken to school by their parents the evening before they set sail for their new home.

Mr. Lane has been once to see his boys, who are very happy at school; and he tells them that their mother has chosen one of the prettiest rooms in the house, which she calls theirs, and that she is already planning how it shall be furnished, so as to seem homelike to her boys when they are old enough to join her and their father. Mr. Lane also told them that there was a large orange-tree just outside their window, which delighted them greatly; and when they talk (as they often do) of their new home, you may be sure this wonderful orange-tree is never forgotten. M. B.

THE SUMMER SHOWER.

IT'S raining, it's raining, so heavily, heavily,
The only dry place is just under the tree;
There let us scamper, so merrily, merrily,
Keeping together as close as can be.

Look at the rainbow, so glorious and wonderful,
Stretching its great arch far up in the sky,
While all around the clouds, heavy and thunder-full,
Tinge fields and trees with their stormy red dye.

Look how the hills are all purple behind us;
See how the sky is all gloomy and black:
Francis and Willy, indeed you must mind us,
Rain is still falling—this moment come back.

Yes, on that side the bright sun is now shining,
Tinting the tops of the trees with its glow;
Raindrops and sunbeams, their splendours combining,
Colour the beautiful rainbow, you know.

Do you not hear how the heavy drops patter
On the broad branches that cover us now;
We are not shorn, like the sheep, so no matter;
See how they shelter themselves near the cow.

Old Nurse, perhaps, is afraid of the thunder,
Guessing in vain where her children can be;
After such torrents of rain, she will wonder
To find us all dry 'neath the broad chestnut-tree. *Summer Songs.*

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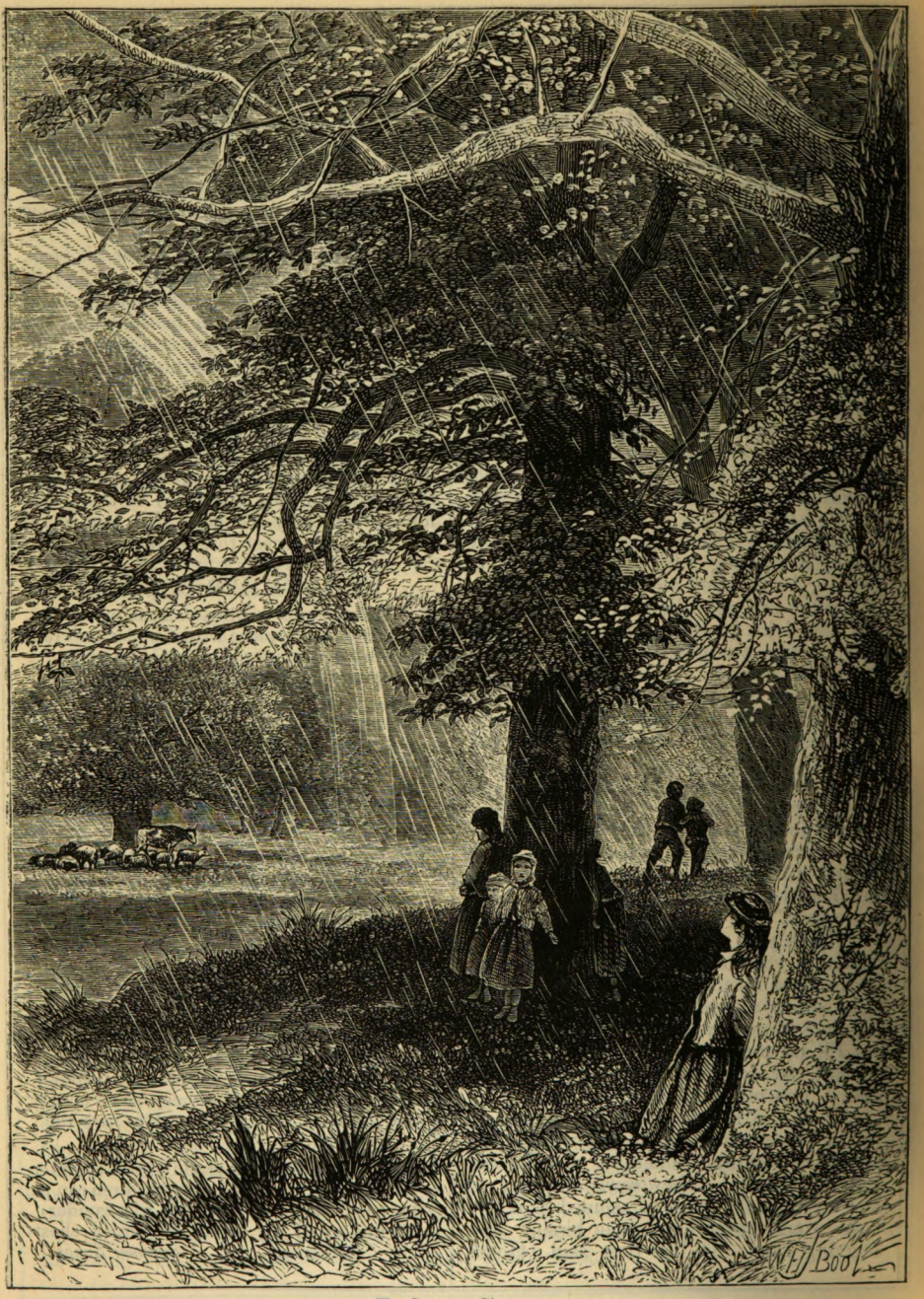

The Summer Shower.

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'Salome danced before Herod and his guests.'

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DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

SALOME.

SALOME, the daughter of Herodias, was the damsel who helped to bring about the murder of St. John the Baptist. Salome's mother, Herodias, was a granddaughter of that Herod the Great who caused the infants at Bethlehem to be massacred; and her father was Herod Philip, one of the fifteen sons of the same Herod the Great.

Whilst Salome was still quite a child, Herodias wickedly left her husband, Herod Philip, in order to become the wife of Herod Antipas, another of the sons of Herod the Great. Now this man was the Tetrarch (or, as he was commonly called, the King) of Galilee, and also of Peræa, the country on the east of the river Jordan, reaching as far as to the Dead Sea. He had long been married to a daughter of Aretas, the king of that part of Arabia which joined his own dominions, but that princess had fled home to her father when she heard that her husband was going to marry Herodias.

After the sinful marriage took place, Herod Antipas was sternly rebuked by St. John the Baptist, who said of Herodias, '*It is not lawful for thee to have her.*' But, instead of repenting, and restoring her to his brother Philip, Herod added to all his other sins that of shutting up St. John in prison. To keep him there was all that Herod intended to do, because he greatly respected his prisoner, and because he *feared the multitude*, who *counted* St. John *as a prophet;* but Herodias was resolved that he should die,—and, after vainly urging Herod to slay him, she watched for a chance of carrying out her plan of revenge. The place of the Baptist's captivity is said to have been the castle of Machærus, which was a strong fortress at the south of Peræa, on the coast of the Dead Sea. Herod Antipas usually lived in Galilee; but it would seem that, as he was at war with Aretas, the father of his lawful and ill-treated wife, he went for a time to the fortress of Machærus, and made it his head-quarters, so that St. John the Baptist's dungeon and the king's palace were close together. Before long there came *the convenient time* for which Herodias had eagerly longed. The story of the crime is given by St. Matthew (xiv. 3–11) and St. Mark (vi. 17–28).

St. Mark tells us that *Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates* (men of high rank) *of Galilee.* Although the custom of thus keeping birthdays was observed by heathen nations as early as the time when Joseph was in Egypt, it had never been generally followed by the Jews. But the family of the Herods learned the practice from the Romans, and, like them, turned the anniversary of a birth into occasions of revelling and drunkenness,—times when Satan tempts people to commit sins, from which, if they were sober, they would shrink back in horror. So it was in this case; and perhaps if Herod could have seen the end from the beginning, his birthday-feast would never have been held.

It was not likely that the daughter of such a woman as Herodias would be taught to follow the Jewish custom, which forbade maidens to exhibit themselves as dancers in the presence of company, and we are not surprised to find that, forgetful of all modesty, Salome *came in* after supper, *and danced* before Herod and his guests. No doubt this was a dance which she performed alone, after the fashion of the hired dancing-girls whose skill and gracefulness are still exhibited on festive occasions in Eastern lands; and so delighted was Herod, that, being excited by the wine which he had drunk, he swore an oath, saying, *Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.* This expression, *the half of my kingdom*, seems to have been a saying used by kings, to mean that they were willing to grant the highest favour that was likely to be asked; and Herod would expect that the young damsel would name some costly ornament or article of dress. What must have been his horror when, after going to consult her mother, Salome returned in haste with the demand, *Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger!*

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Carefully had the revengeful woman taught her child the very words which she was to say. *Give me here;* not anywhere, and at any time, but here, and now, so that all may see how the oath is kept; and *in a charger* (a large flat dish or tray), so that I myself, without spoiling my dress, may carry away the head, and place it in my mother's hands.

And the king was exceeding sorry, yet, because he was too cowardly to confess himself wrong, he commanded that the head should be given her. Sinful as it was to make such an oath, it was still more sinful to fulfil it by a deed of murder. Yet Herod did this rather than let his nobles say that he had broken his word. He therefore sent one of his guards to behead the holy prophet in his dungeon; and so exactly was Salome's request complied with, that when the man returned *he brought the head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.*

It is only too certain, that just as Salome was urged on by her mother to this dreadful act, so, even now, in Christian England, thousands of young people are taught by their parents to commit theft, and other sins against God. Most sad is the case of boys and girls in such families as these. Shall we not pray for them, that they may be led to know the evil and misery of such ways; and may have grace and strength to refuse to walk in them? And shall we not thank God for having placed us in happy homes? —where

'Jesu's Name
Is sweet to every ear;
Where children early lisp His Name,
And parents hold Him dear.'

'SO HUNGRY!'

POOR little Carrie Dale! The people who lived in the long street and saw her pass every day to school used to wonder why the little pale-faced scholar looked so weary and sad; for Carrie Dale was not a strong, hearty child, and she used to feel tired and downcast so often that her little face came to have a settled look of pitiful weariness.

'The child can't be well,' thought the governess; and with this thought in her mind, she spoke more gently and kindly to Carrie than usual; but the kind words only brought tears into the sorrowful eyes, and made the thin lips quiver and tremble.

No one took the trouble to befriend the lonely child, nor tried with patient kindness to find out what it was that made her so unlike the rest of the children.

Yet Carrie was not a poor orphan, with no one to care for her; both her parents were living, and they were well off, and always provided their children with what was needful and good for them; so that Carrie never knew what it was to be in want of food. And yet, strange as it may seem, she would often steal away by herself into some quiet nook, where no one could see her, and cover her face with her hands, and cry. And in a very low tone, so that no one might hear, the used to whisper, 'So hungry! Oh, so hungry! So *very* hungry!'

And the same mournful cry was often in her heart when she was comfortably resting in her bed at night. 'So hungry! *So* hungry for a kiss, and somebody to call me "darling."'

But no one ever knew that Carrie felt like this; and she never once thought of telling anybody, until she was several years older, and much stronger and happier than she used to be. Then, one day, she told a friend of hers how she used to feel when she was a child, and that friend is now writing it down for you, dear children.

Shall I tell you why I wanted you to know about Carrie Dale? Just for this reason. There are many sorrowful little girls in the world, and many who are *so* hungry for a kiss, and a loving word. Perhaps there is one among your own schoolfellows. Will you not try to comfort the sad heart, and make the dull, tired face look bright and happy? I know you can do it if you try.

And the Lord Jesus will see you trying, and He will be pleased. When He was here He often used to comfort the sad and sorrowing, and His Word tells us that we are to walk in His steps. Will you try?

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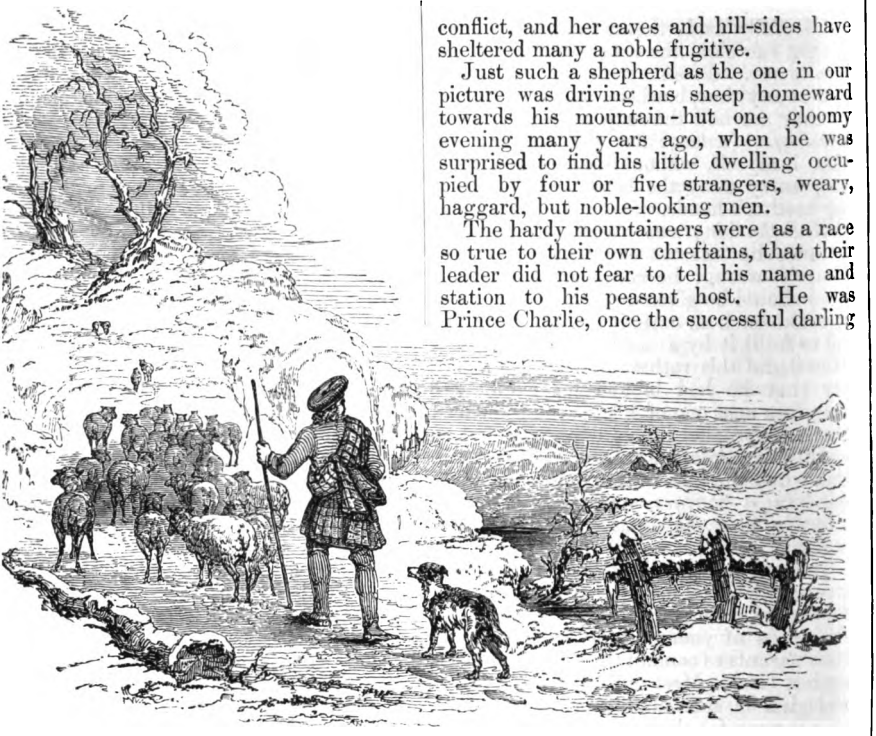

OUR NEIGHBOURS IN THE NORTH.

HERE are two pictures of our Northern neighbours; you can all tell in a moment who I mean by the dress of the shepherd and the fisherman. Toilsome lives they lead doubtless, poor fellows, in their rugged mountain homes, or on their blustering sea-coast.

Dull lives, too, watching sheep on lonely crags, or going out in their little fishing-boats day by day.

But our Scotch neighbours, even the quiet mountaineer and fisherman, have in days gone by had great excitements at times to rouse them up, for Scotland has been the scene of many a terrible conflict, and her caves and hill-sides have sheltered many a noble fugitive.

Just such a shepherd as the one in our picture was driving his sheep homeward towards his mountain-hut one gloomy evening many years ago, when he was surprised to find his little dwelling occupied by four or five strangers, weary, haggard, but noble-looking men.

The hardy mountaineers were as a race so true to their own chieftains, that their leader did not fear to tell his name and station to his peasant host. He was Prince Charlie, once the successful darling of a great part of the kingdom, now a defeated hopeless fugitive, waiting for a chance of escaping to France.

A night's shelter was all the little party asked, for they were closely pursued, they knew, and dared not remain long in any place.

But the night did not pass peacefully, they were surprised and surrounded by some English soldiers, anxious to win the large sum set on the head of the Prince.

And he would doubtless have been captured but for the bravery of one of his followers, a youth named Mackenzie. In the first confusion of the attack this young man got away, and his companions to deceive the soldiers, pretended that it was the Prince who had escaped.

Immediately they all dispersed in search of the youth, who nobly passed for his master, and refusing to yield, fell beneath

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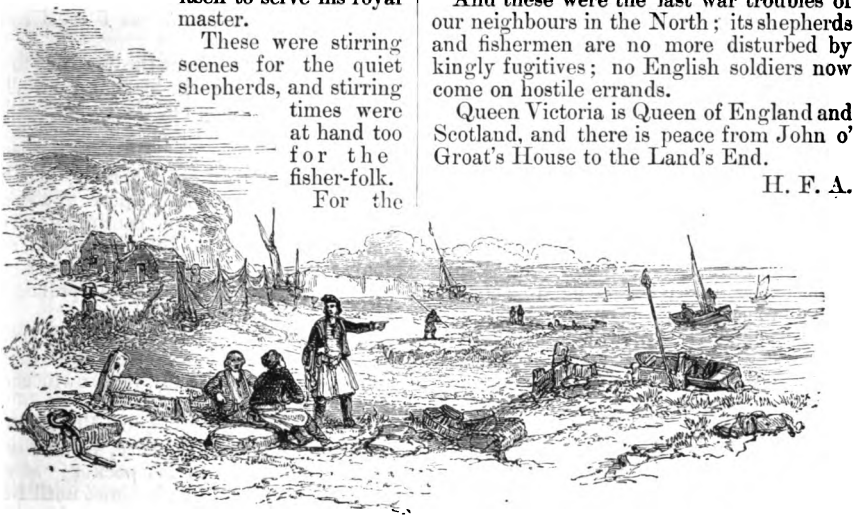
the blows of his enemies. It must have grieved Prince Charlie sorely to lose so true a friend, one who did not grudge life itself to serve his royal master.

These were stirring scenes for the quiet shepherds, and stirring times were at hand too for the fisher-folk. For the Prince and his friends having escaped the dangers of the mountains and crept quietly down to the coast, one and another of the clumsy fishing-boats would steal out with its little group of passengers under cover of night, and make for a French ship that was out at sea.



The fisherman often did not know what noble or gentle passenger he took on board; he only knew that gold, real gold, was pressed into his hard hand, enough to keep his babes from want the long winter through; but often, for Scottish hearts are true, as I told you before, he did know, and knew that danger and trouble awaited those who lent help to his weary passengers; and still he did not hesitate, but prayed for a fair wind and a safe passage, and made for the speck in the distance.

And one morning that French vessel spread its sails, and glided away, with Prince Charlie, twenty-five noblemen, and a hundred and seven common men on board.

A sad little band, forced to leave their fatherland, some never to return. Prince Charlie never did; he was kindly received in France, and there and in Italy he lived for the rest of his life.

And these were the last war troubles of our neighbours in the North; its shepherds and fishermen are no more disturbed by kingly fugitives; no English soldiers now come on hostile errands.

Queen Victoria is Queen of England and Scotland, and there is peace from John o' Groat's House to the Land's End.

H. F. A.

JENNY, THE LITTLE THIEF.

(*Continued from page* 107.)

CHAPTER V.

We must now pass over a year during which time Jenny's sin of thieving had increased, and she had, in fact, become known in the village as 'the little thief.' She did not scruple to run in at an open door, and whilst no one was looking to snatch a piece of cake, or half a loaf of bread from the table; or, indeed, anything she could lay her hands upon.

You will wonder, perhaps, that she was not punished or checked in some way, but no one would take it upon themselves to do so.

'She is a poor, ignorant girl,' they would say, 'and has never been taught any better;' or, 'Poor thing! her mother has had hard times enough, and we don't want

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to give her fresh trouble about her child.' And so Jenny was left alone to go on in her bad ways. There were, indeed, plenty of respectable people in the village who might have done something to rescue her, or who, at least, might have tried to do so; but, I suppose, it did not occur to them. They thought they had done their duty in getting up a subscription for the family in the first place, and now there was nothing more to be done. 'If the mother chose to bring up her children in bad ways, well, they could not help it; it was no business of theirs, although, to be sure, it was a pity the girl should go to ruin.' So they reasoned and quieted their consciences, instead of trying to persuade Jenny to go to school, or giving her some honest employment, which might have made her feel of use in the world, and given her a little self-respect. We are all too fond, I am afraid, of letting bad alone and not trying to make things better, either because we think it is 'no business of ours,' and so it is left undone by every one; or because we do not think about it at all.

Made bold by her success in her thefts, Jenny one day ventured a little too far. She had always hitherto avoided old Mr. Burt's house in fear of the treatment she might receive if caught by him; but one morning, having watched him go out of his house, and thinking he was gone for his usual walk on the beach, she ventured in to see what she could pick up. It was indeed a dark place, and it was some time before her eyes got used to the dim light. Presently, however, she espied his netting, with a large white-handled clasp-knife beside it, and in a drawer she found two or three balls of twine. She pocketed the knife and two balls of twine, and turned to go towards the door, but there she saw—oh, dreadful sight!—the old man's twinkling eyes gazing at her from the threshold. She stood fixed to the spot, and felt very like a poor little mouse at the mercy of a cat.

'So I've caught you at last, have I, you little thief?' said Mr. Burt, advancing towards her, 'and I'm glad I have, too; it is high time for some one to take you in hand and send you to gaol,' giving her a shake as he spoke. 'And now, I wonder what you have taken a fancy to in my house? come, turn out your pocket.'

'I haven't got nothing,' said Jenny; 'I only runned in after our cat I see'd come in here.'

'We'll soon see about the truth of that,' said Mr. Burt, diving his hand into her pocket, and bringing out the stolen articles. 'Whose do you call these?' he asked, holding them up before her. But Jenny, finding it useless to defend herself, held her tongue. 'I wonder what more you've got that don't belong to you,' continued the old man. 'Here, what's this?' he said, suddenly catching hold of a piece of black cord which was around her neck, and pulling out to view a little heart of red stone.

'Stop, stop!' cried Jenny, eagerly trying to seize it, 'you shan't have that—it ain't none of yours—it 's my very own, and I always wears it.'

'Stolen not a week ago, I'll warrant, from some of the ladies here,' he answered, quietly putting it in his pocket; 'at any rate I shall keep it for the time, until I can find out something more about it.'

At this Jenny tried another tack, and burst out crying, 'I didn't steal it, I didn't; 'twas a kind young lady gived it to me last summer, and she's sure to ax me about it when she come again, and now you've agone and taken it from me, and she'll scold me finely when she see me—an, do 'ee let me have it.'

'No, no,' said the old man, quite unmoved by this outburst, 'you're a wicked maid, and there's no believing a word you say; I don't believe you know yourself when you're speaking the truth. You go in there,' pushing her as he spoke, into a little room, darker even than the one they were in, 'and stay there till I come back,' and, fastening the door upon her, he went out.

The lifeboat was to be taken out that day at one o'clock for its quarterly trip, and Mr. Burt went, with many of the villagers, to the lifeboat house, which was in the middle of the village, to watch the boat drawn out on its carriage by four strong horses along the street, and down the rugged road to the beach, and then they

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proceeded to launch her. The sea was rough, and it was a pretty sight to watch the boat—the men having first taken their seats in her, all begirt with their cork jackets, and oars in hand—glide off her stand, and dash into the breakers, whilst the lookers-on cheered her heartily. As soon as she was off, Mr. Burt strolled along the shore, and presently came in sight of a lady and two children seated on some rocks not far off. He easily recognised them as Mrs. Scott and her two eldest children, and going up to her saluted her respectfully: 'Good afternoon, madam! so you have honoured North Pier with a visit again.'

'We only came the day before yesterday,' said Mrs. Scott, greeting the old man, 'my children have had the whooping-cough, and I have brought them for change of air. They heard from their friend Jenny that the lifeboat was to be taken out to-day, and they would not let me rest until I brought them down to see it. And now, dears,' she said, turning to the children, 'I am afraid you will catch cold; run along the beach, and see if Jenny is coming. I think she must have forgotten her promise.' Then, turning to Mr. Burt, she said, 'They struck up a great friendship with Jenny Stone last year, and when she saw them yesterday she promised to take them this afternoon to the top of the island, as they would have a better view of the lifeboat from there; but she has not come yet.'

'And I do not think she is likely to,' said Mr. Burt, 'for I left her locked up in my house. Perhaps you are not aware, madam,' he continued, 'that Jenny is a thief, I caught her in my house just now, picking up several things, so I locked her up, and told her she should stay there until I chose to let her out. Here is something,' he added, 'which I found on her,' showing the little red heart to Mrs. Scott; 'she says a young lady gave it to her, but I have my doubts about that.'

'I think I know that little cornelian stone,' said Mrs. Scott, taking it in her hands, 'it belonged to my little girl, and she lost it last year when bathing; but how Jenny can have got hold of it, I don't know.'

Just then Willie and Barbara came running back to say that they could not see Jenny coming, and 'mightn't they go up the island by themselves?'

'Come here, Barbara,' said her mother, without answering their question, 'do you know that?' she said, holding out the long-lost treasure.

'Why, mother, where did you find that?' exclaimed Barbara; 'it's my own precious little heart which I lost last year—who can have picked it up?'

'Mr. Burt has just given it to me, Barbara; he says Jenny Stone had it, and she told him a young lady gave it her last year; can you think how she got hold of it?'

'Oh, now I remember,' said Barbara, after thinking a minute, 'don't you know she was taking care of the donkey and watching our clothes the day I lost it—she must have taken it then. But, mother, do you think Jenny would be so wicked as to steal?'

'I am afraid so, dear, from what I hear; but we must not judge her too hastily; we must ask her about it by-and-bye, and see what she has to say for herself. I will keep it safe now, if you want to go.'

'If the young lady and gentleman would like it,' said Mr. Burt, 'I will take them up to the top of the island, and then they will be able to watch the lifeboat further—it is gone out of sight round the headland.'

'Oh, thank you, Mr. Burt, you are very kind, but it is only troubling you, and I daresay they are just as happy down here playing about,' said Mrs. Scott; 'I would take them up myself, but I get giddy if I try to climb.'

'O, mother, do let us go,' entreated Willie (who had been good friends with Mr. Burt ever since that day on which he had so kindly helped them in their trouble with Peter), 'we want to so much, and Mr. Burt will take care of us.'

So the old man took them off.

The island was a piece of cliff detached from the mainland, and when the tide was in, it was quite surrounded by water. The rocks on which Mrs. Scott was sitting were close beneath it. The top of the island was about a quarter of an acre in extent, and was used as a kitchen-garden; a low

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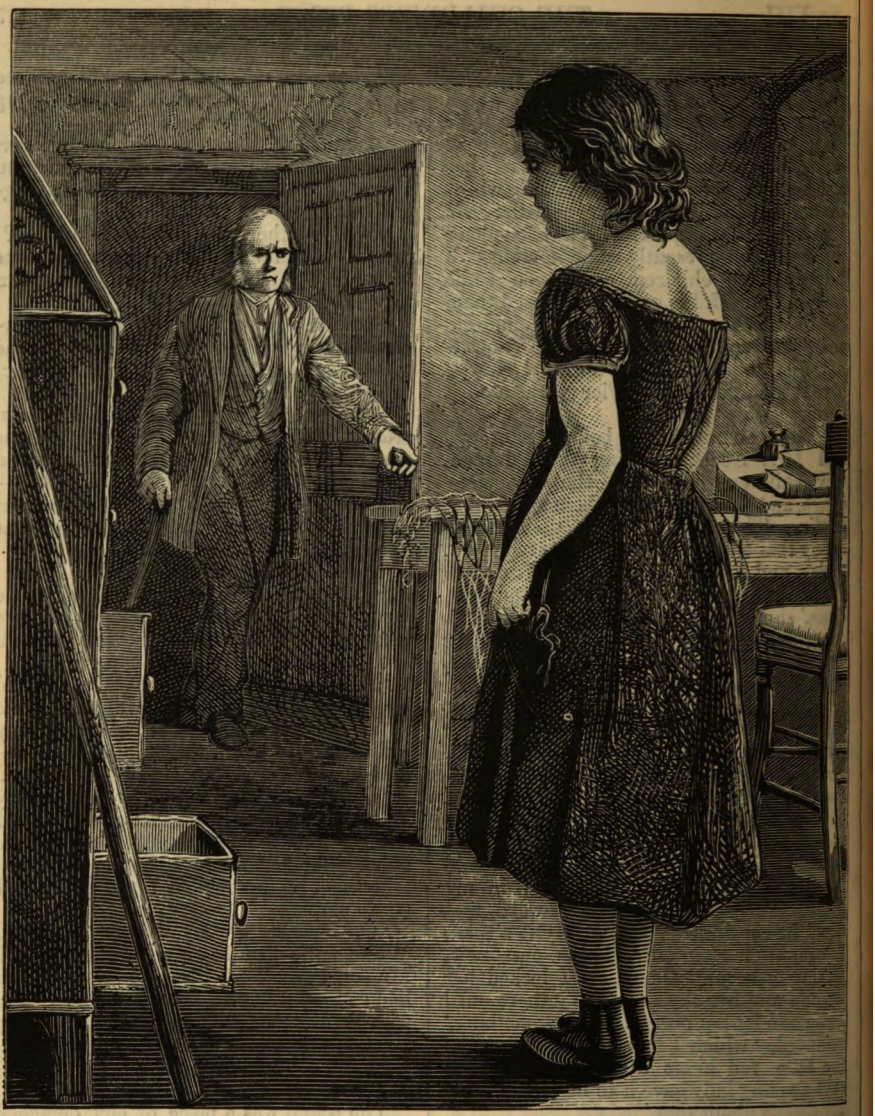

'She stood fixed to the spot.' P. 126.

hedge ran around the edge of the cliff, with here and there a gap in it through which one might easily slip and fall down to the beach, a hundred feet below.

A narrow, winding path led up to the summit, and by this path Mr. Burt and the children now ascended.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IX.] SEPTEMBER, 1871. [One Penny.

Maggie's Canary.

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MAGGIE'S CANARY.

MAGGIE WESTON had such a happy face; her eyes shone with such good humour, and her laugh rang out so merrily, that she seemed like a little bit of sunshine in her home. But, dearly as her friends loved her, they could not help noticing one fault which was very sad to see. Maggie was so soon tired of everything—nothing pleased her long. Whether it was a book, or a toy, or even a young companion she soon ceased to care for them, and turned eagerly to seek some new interest. I will tell you of one instance where this fault brought her much sorrow.

Maggie's tenth birthday was coming very near, and, as usual, her parents were thinking what they could give her as a present. She had so many pretty things, games, puzzles, books, and everything for which a little girl could wish, that it was difficult to find her anything which she had not already. But a sudden thought came to Mrs. Weston. 'I will get her a bird,' she thought; 'Maggie has often wished for a canary, and she shall have one in a pretty cage as her birthday gift.'

So the canary was bought, and a beautiful bird it was, with bright feathers, and a sweet, soft note.

On the birthday morning, the first streak of daylight peeping in at her window, roused Maggie from her sleep. 'It is my birthday,' she said, as she jumped out of bed and ran to look if the day promised to be fine. Yes, the sun was rising, the birds were singing in the tall trees that skirted the garden, the fresh breeze of early morning rustled the leaves and bore the scent of the early summer flowers up to the window where Maggie stood looking out; it promised to be as bright and lovely as a birthday in May could well be.

It was too early to get up, Maggie knew that very well. She listened for the striking of the great clock in the hall. She even crept out softly to the staircase to hear if any one was stirring; but no,—all was silent, and Maggie was forced to go back to bed, and wait with what patience she could until the welcome summons came to bid her rise.

There was no need to be called twice that morning, Maggie was up in an instant, and, dressing quickly, scampered down to the breakfast-room to receive the good wishes and presents that she well knew would be ready for her.

Maggie certainly was fortunate, for there, on a little table, were the birthday gifts—a new work-basket, a writing-case, several books, and, best of all, the bright yellow canary in his handsome cage.

Maggie almost screamed with delight. 'Oh, you beauty!' she cried, 'how I shall love you;' and then as she sat at breakfast the little girl talked of the care she must take of this canary, how she would feed him daily, and find fresh sprays of chickweed and groundsel, and how tame he should be.

'You must never forget your bird, or get tired of attending to him, or he will certainly die,' said Mrs. Weston; and Maggie, as she thanked her mother for the present over and over again, said that she never could forget her beautiful canary.

For the first few weeks Maggie spent every leisure moment by the canary's cage, talking to him, and singing to him, and she was delighted as he learnt to know her, and would give a little 'chirp, chirp' of pleasure at her approach, and even come to the side of the cage and peck the tips of her fingers as she pressed them against the wires. The pretty bird seemed so happy as he hung in the sunny window, supplied with plenty of seed and water, and all that a bird could wish, except, indeed, his liberty, and that the little canary had never known, for he had been hatched and reared in a cage like his parents before him.

But after the first few weeks, Maggie had a new pet given her; her uncle brought her a little curly-haired dog whom she called 'Floss,' and who soon took all the love and attention from the canary. *He*, poor fellow, now went for days together with a dirty cage and nearly empty glasses. No more cheerful talking and laughing

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to him; Maggie's time was taken up in games with her dog, in teaching him to sit up and beg for biscuits, to run races in the garden, and to do all kinds of funny tricks.

'Maggie, if you neglect your bird so, he will die,' said her mother; and then, with a sudden sense of shame, Maggie would run to feed the canary, but he was soon forgotten again in the pleasure of having 'Floss.'

The pretty bird began to droop, and looked sadly changed from the joyous little creature it had been, and at length when Maggie glanced towards the window one day in passing, she was startled not to see her bird as usual on his perch.

She ran to the cage, and lifting it from the hook, she saw the poor canary lying at the bottom, panting and ill; no need to ask the reason, for the empty glasses told the tale too plainly. Maggie called aloud for her mother, but there was nothing to be done. No more would those sweet notes be heard in the sunny window, no more pleasant chirpings to greet Maggie, in a few moments the pretty canary was stiff and motionless, and not all the little girl's sobs and tears could bring back life again.

It was a sorrowful day to Maggie, and for a long time, whenever she looked at the empty window where once his cage had hung, she felt sad and ashamed as she thought of the cruel neglect that had killed the little bird she had once loved so well.

MISS BURTON'S SCHOOL-CHILDREN.

IT was a lovely evening in summer when Miss Burton, the daughter of a clergyman who had lately come to Woodbury, strolled down the Rectory garden into the churchyard, which was almost gay with its little grave-gardens.

Everything was so calm and still that she looked up quite startled as she heard a rustling at a grave near her. There stood a little girl of about eight years old, tidily dressed, with a round face and sunny hair, gazing, but not sadly, at the head-stone, every now and then stooping to remove a stray leaf or raise a drooping flower. When she stooped, Miss Burton saw that she was lame, and supported herself on a crutch.

In two minutes she had made friends with the child, and found out that she was the niece of Miss Patience Carden, the late housekeeper at the Hall, but who, since Squire Dent's death, had lived in one of his lodges.

'Father, mother, and baby were all dead,' said little Grace; but auntie took care of her. She only remembered mother who was buried here. Mother had loved her very much, and taught her, and sang to her, and told her to be a good girl, and she should come to her in heaven some day. And she would like to be good, but she did not know how. Could Miss Burton tell her?

Miss Burton asked, Was she a good little girl to Aunt Patience?

And Grace smiled, and said, Oh, yes; Aunt Patience said she was very good: but she wanted to do good to some one else, like mother did.

'To some little child poorer or naughtier than you are?' asked Miss Burton.

And Grace nodded her head.

'Yes,' she said. 'Could I, do you think? I often want to.'

Grace Carden was a thoughtful child for her age, and the remembrance of a good and gentle mother had given her longings after something better than mere self-pleasing; her lameness, too, from a severe burn as a baby, which had caused one leg to shrink, had hindered her from joining in the games of children of her own age, so that she needed something else to occupy her mind.

'Do you know any little girl that does not come to school on Sunday,' asked Miss Burton, 'whom you could persuade to come, Grace? That would be a good deed.'

Grace pondered and brightened. 'There's Jemima Wright, she never comes; I could ask her, though Aunt Patience doesn't like my talking to her; but I'm afraid she won't.'

'My dear,' said Miss Burton, 'I want to have all the village children for my Sunday scholars.'

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Miss Burton and Grace.

Miss Burton thought a great deal of her Sunday-school, and tried to get the children to enjoy it. A lady, who had long lived in the village, taught the first class, so she would not disturb her, but chose the next class for her own, consisting of little girls who could just read.

Among them, on Sunday morning, sat

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Jemima Wright in School.

Grace Carden, with bright face, and clean pinafore, and crutch by her side. Four or five other children had already arrived, but only one attracted Miss Burton's attention, partly because a titter went round when the new-comer came into the class, and partly because the child's appearance was so strange.

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About nine years old, but stunted in growth, with sharp black eyes and dark hair, well flattened down with oil, Jemima Wright might well excite a smile. She wore a faded scarlet merino frock, a silk jacket, and a gay bonnet with a long feather, greatly too large for her, while in her hand she held a highly-scented pocket-handkerchief.

Miss Burton stopped the laugh and listened kindly to what her new pupil had to say.

'I've never been to Sunday-school before,' said Miss Jemima; 'but father said, since Grace there said you wished it, I might go if I'd a mind;' and with an angry look at her giggling neighbours, the girl sat down on the end of a form. Grace was next to her, and instantly made room for her by moving her prayer-book and crutch.

The teaching was of Heaven, which Miss Burton tried to describe as happier than the happiest homes on earth.

'We've not got a happy home,' said Jemima, almost fiercely; 'and it's all along of that new public-house in the village. Father drinks and beats me and the children, but he daren't touch Ned or he'd give it him back again.'

'Oh, hush, my child,' said Miss Burton, shocked at the hard tone of Jemima's voice; 'do not speak so of your father.'

But Jemima's keen eyes still flashed, till Grace gently took her hand and stroked it to show her sympathy, and then Jemima's face softened, and she listened to the rest of Miss Burton's teaching.

She had no mother; though, alas! her mother had been a worthless woman, much given to drink, and her teacher resolved to visit her in the week at her own home, and try to find out some way of helping her.

After school Grace came up to Miss Burton. 'Aren't you sorry for poor Jemima,' she asked, 'with such a bad home? and please will you tell Susy and Jane not to laugh at her, or she won't come to school any more?'

'Does Jemima keep house for her father?' asked Miss Burton.

'She's got an Aunt Selina there, too, but she's going back to mill-work at Barford soon, and then there'll only be Jemima.'

'And was that Aunt Selina's bonnet she wore to-day?' said Miss Burton.

'Yes,' said Grace, 'she told me so; and she says Aunt Selina has lots of fine clothes, and when she is in a good temper she will always lend them to her.'

It was not long before Miss Burton paid a visit to the Wrights' house.

Aunt Selina was at home, a sharp-faced, quick-spoken young woman, fine and dirty, full of complaints of her brother's drunken habits and neglect of his family, the boys' rudeness, and Jemima's pertness.

All very true, perhaps, but Miss Burton could not help feeling very sorry for the neglected children, who had never known a good mother, and lived in such a miserable home. They ought not to have been very poor, for the father, aunt, and eldest boy, earned good wages.

Before she left the house, a rough-looking boy pushed his way in and called out angrily for his dinner, getting a sharp word from his aunt in return. As Jemima was not in, Miss Burton felt it was no use staying longer; so she bid Selina good-bye and went home full of thought.

(To be continued.)

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE SYRO-PHŒNICIAN WOMAN.

JUST to the north-west of Palestine, along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, was a little tract of country which, when our blessed Lord was on earth, was called Syro-Phœnicia. Two of its cities, Tyre and Sidon, are often mentioned in the Bible; and another called Zarephath, or Sarepta, was the abode of the widow whose son was raised to life by the prophet Elijah. The people of the land were heathen, but a few of them had been converted to the Jewish religion; and St. Luke tells us that among the multitudes that came to hear Jesus, and to be healed of their diseases, were people *from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon* (St. Luke, vi. 17).

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From these men and women their heathen neighbours no doubt heard how mighty was the power, and how marvellous the love, shown by the Great Teacher to those who went to Him for help.

And so when tidings came that the Great Teacher was in the part of Palestine which was nearest to their land, in one Syro-Phœnician home at least this news raised hope where only despair had been felt before. In that home lived *a certain woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit* (St. Mark, vii. 25), an affliction which was far worse than madness, and quite beyond man's power or skill to cure. The girl could get no rest by night or by day; and to see her affliction must have been a sadder trial than it would have been to watch her dying of fever, or any other sickness. But now the poor mother, although a Greek (that is, an idol-worshipper), made up her mind to go to this Mighty One, and try whether He would bestow upon her one of those blessings which He had given so freely to His own people in Galilee.

With what an anxious heart must she have crossed the boundary of her own land to seek Him! And when she saw the Lord Jesus she did not venture to draw very near to Him and His disciples as they walked along; but humbly she cried after Him, saying, *Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil* (St. Matt. xv. 22). These words must have been very pleasing to our Lord, because they proved that the poor heathen woman believed Him to be the Messiah whom the whole Jewish nation were expecting, and that she longed for the mercy which the favoured Jews were so sinfully refusing to accept. Yet *He answered her not a word.* This was not because she was a heathen and a Canaanite, but in order to perfect the deeply-rooted faith which Jesus saw in her heart.

The disciples were afraid that her cries would draw the attention of passers-by to their Master, who had come into that neighbourhood to live for a time in retirement; and as they knew that no one ever was sent away from Him unheard and unanswered, they said, *Send her away; for she crieth after us.*

But instead of the pitying, comforting words which they supposed He would speak to the woman, the Lord Jesus answered them by saying, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* a reply which meant, This woman is only a heathen, and My blessings are for the Jews! Yet was not this He in whom *all the nations of the earth* were to be blessed? Yes; but for His own wise purposes the heathen were not thus to be blessed until after He had ascended into heaven, and so His preaching and miracles were not for them, but for the Jews.

Instead of turning sadly and silently away, as we might have expected, the poor woman now came and bowed herself low before His feet, saying, very reverently, *Lord, help me.* Then, for the first time, Jesus spoke to her, and said, *It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs;* which was as much as to say, It is not fit to take the blessings which are for the children of God's kingdom, and to give them to the Gentiles, who are dogs rather than children.

Her love for her child, and her trust in Jesus, made her venture once more to speak and say, *Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table;* thus showing that she still hoped for His mercy, even if her share were as small as the pieces of bread that are dropped under the table at meals, and are eaten by the dogs which are waiting there for them.

And now came the reward of her deep humility, her steadfast faith, and her perseverance. *Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt* (St. Matt. xv. 28). *For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter* (St. Mark, vii. 29). So mighty was the power of Jesus over Satan's kingdom that at His word the damsel far away in her home was that very moment delivered from the evil spirit by which she had been tormented. When her mother *was come to the house, she found the devil gone out and her daughter laid upon the bed,* to enjoy the rest which she had so long been unable to obtain.

In this miracle we have a very beautiful

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'She cried after him, Have mercy on me, O Lord.'

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The Return Home.

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example of what is taught us by our Blessed Lord in His parable of 'the Friend at Midnight' (St. Luke, xi. 5–8), and in the words which follow it (verses 8 and 9), *And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* We also learn, that because God chooses His own good time we must patiently wait for it; and while waiting for what we are seeking we must ask often for it, or else we shall lose the good which it is His will that we should have.

Praying not for one's self but for others, as the mother prayed for her young daughter, is called Intercession; and we cannot learn too early in life how important a duty and how great a privilege it is to offer such prayer to God. Indeed, we cannot say our Lord's own prayer without praying for others as well as for ourselves; and much of our Church Service—the Litany, for instance—consists of intercessory prayer. In our private prayers, we should always pray by name for those we love, and for any whom we know to be too ill or too hardened in sin to pray for themselves.

THE RETURN HOME.

GOLDEN is the light of evening,
Soon will set the Autumn sun;
O'er the fields the lengthening shadows
Show the day is nearly done.

Richly laden from the corn-fields,
Homeward see the gleaners wend,
Where, from cottage chimneys, smoke-wreaths
With the distant landscape blend.

Little children run to meet them,
Laughing, shouting with delight;
And the eldest brings the baby,
Welcome to the mother's sight.

They are happy; these poor gleaners,
Though they work till set of sun;
Though to old age, from their childhood,
Never is their labour done.

Yet their sleep is all the sweeter,
Relished is their frugal meal;
And, for God's rich gifts of nature,
Joy and thankfulness they feel.

Summer Songs.

OUR GRANDMOTHER.

HERE hangs her picture, looking lovingly down on the family group as they gather round the old table. A beautiful grandmother she was. A voice quick and pleasant, and a brow so high and calm, it seemed to say, 'However stormy is the world outside, within is peace.'

We all loved grandmamma C——, from the little sly-boots of a youngest grandson, who would pick her pockets of sweetmeats, to the grave and grown-up head of the family. We have all shared her love and her bounty. Charming days those were, when grandmother and young ones had it all to themselves. What dinners we used to have; for grandmother was a first-rate cook, and had her finger in every pie. Such puddings, such cakes, such tarts, as she always had for us! Then such a garden she had: it grew the finest peaches, the most luscious cherries, the rosiest apples, the most grape-like currants. To make the day as happy as days can be made, was grandmother's delight.

True, it was said she spoiled us, but, thanks to our really right-minded mother, we never were spoiled children. It was a pleasant thing to walk with grandmother. She was born in the old city of York, and she loved the city better than the country. But we never wearied of walking about with her; sometimes into the grand old Minster, to hear the solemn organ-peals that thrilled through our souls, and sometimes to gaze into the shop-windows in the quaint narrow streets. But there were other walks we loved better still. Grandmother had a well-filled purse, and a large heart, and she knew and loved the poor. Many a basket of dainties for the sick, or useful provisions for the needy, have we helped to carry. Many a dark stair have we joyfully run up, that we might see the first sweet smile of a weary sufferer as she entered the room. Many good words have we listened to about the

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love of Jesus to His sick disciples. Many a fervent prayer have we heard offered up by our grandmother's ready lips.

Grandmother was never idle; busily she plied her knitting-needles. We should like to remember how many socks and stockings she knitted to keep little legs and feet warm in winter. We should like to know how many counterpanes she patched in curious figures. She was quite a genius in needlework, and most beautiful keepsakes we all have of her own handiwork. She was an early riser: we have known her often downstairs before the servants, and she has opened the shutters, and seated herself quietly down with her Bible and Prayer-book, or to her work, before any of us were astir.

It was a very sad day to us all when grandmother was taken from us. We never seemed to think of her dying; she so enjoyed life, and had no infirmity but deafness. Her death was very solemn. She spoke of Jesus, and the home He had prepared for her, and blessed all her children and grandchildren. She laid her head gently on her pillow after three days of dying sufferings, and murmured, with her parting breath,—

'How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.'

And thus she fell asleep on earth, and awoke in heaven.

A HYMN.

Written by C. A. G., a little girl of ten years and six months.

LORD of mercy and of goodness,
Shield me through this earthly strife,
While against the waves I struggle
In this panting mortal life;
Lord of mercy,
Lord of goodness,
Shield me through this earthly strife.

Lord of mercy and of goodness,
Keep, O keep me in Thy ways;
Keep me gentle, meek, and loving;
Never, never let me stray;
Lord of mercy,
Lord of goodness,
Never, never let me stray.

JENNY, THE LITTLE THIEF.

(*Continued from page* 128.)

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. SCOTT continued sitting on the rocks for about a quarter of an hour after the children left her, and then, beginning to feel rather chilly, she rose with the intention of walking round to the other side of the island. She had only walked a few steps when she heard a faint scream, seeming to come from above her somewhere in the air, and in another moment a senseless object lay at her feet.

Overcome with surprise, Mrs. Scott stood for a moment motionless, whilst the thought flashed through her mind, 'Can it be Barbara?' but quickly recovering herself, and stooping down, she raised the unconscious form of Jenny Stone.

After having endured her imprisonment impatiently for an hour or two, Jenny had at length been able to bear it no longer, and had contrived, by dint of great exertion, to climb up to a small window high up in the wall, and to squeeze herself out through it. Then, wishing to watch the proceedings of the lifeboat, she ran down to the beach, and, thinking that she should be quite safe from old Mr. Burt on the top of the island, she hastened thither. She had not been there long before Mr. Burt and the two children made their appearance, and the sight of them made her indeed shake in her shoes; but for some time they kept away from the part where she was, and she managed to keep out of sight behind some tall cabbage-stalks. At last, however, they moved towards her: Jenny felt that now she must be discovered, and what would be done to her she did not know. She had feared the worst when Mr. Burt had shut her up, and before he knew the certainty of her guilt, but now, from Barbara's being with him, she had no doubt that he had learnt the truth from her about the cornelian heart. There was only one chance of escape which pre-

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Our Grandmother. P. 188.

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Jenny falling over the Slope.

sented itself to Jenny as she saw them coming nearer and nearer. She was close to a gap in the hedge, and outside there was long grass growing on a narrow ledge of about two feet in width—she would get there and hide herself amongst

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it. So, creeping stealthily from her present hiding-place, she stepped quickly through the gap, for there was no time to lose, not doubting that she should find herself on firm ground. But where was she going? She felt herself slipping through the long grass—the soft earth was giving way beneath her feet, and now she was sliding on to a steep slope covered with short, slippery grass. Oh, if she could only stop herself! She caught at the grass, but it would not hold; and then she gave a shriek as she felt she was going over the edge of the slope, and after that she was conscious of nothing for a long time.

Mr. Burt and the children heard the shriek, and Willie, who was a little in advance, looking over the hedge in the direction from whence the sound came, just caught a glimpse of somebody's head disappearing.

'Oh, Mr. Burt, somebody has fallen over the cliff!' he gasped, his face pale with fright. 'I could only see a head, and it was gone in a moment.'

They hastened down the steep path as fast as they could go, and found Mrs. Scott raising the child's head on her knees, and throwing some water from a pool close by in her face to restore consciousness. Presently the eyes opened, but closed again immediately.

'We must take her home at once,' said Mrs. Scott; 'can we manage to carry her between us?' Mr. Burt stooped down and tried to lift her; but she was a heavy child, and Mr. Burt was not so strong as he had once been, and he was obliged to lay her down again.

'Run and call one of those men who are with the horses belonging to the lifeboat, Willie,' said his mother. He ran off, and presently returned, followed by a man, who lifted Jenny in his arms as if she were a feather.

'Take her to our lodgings at Cals-Othen,' said Mrs. Scott; 'it is nearer than her own home, and I will hasten on, and send for Mr. Doyce, the surgeon.'

When Mr. Doyce arrived, and had examined Jenny, he pronounced that no bones were broken, but that she was suffering from concussion of the brain, and would require careful nursing for some time.

On hearing this, Mrs. Scott determined to keep her in her own lodgings, and watch over her herself until she should recover; for, although she knew nothing of Jenny's mother, she had heard that she was a widow, and knew that the expense of a long illness would fall heavily upon her.

CHAPTER VII.

It was several weeks before Jenny quite recovered, and during that time Mrs. Scott found out her mother, and made every inquiry about Jenny's former life.

One day, when Jenny was recovering, Mrs. Scott said to her, 'Now, Jenny, you must tell me all about that little stone heart, and where you got it from. You have already told Mr. Burt a lie about it, but it is of no use to treat me in that way—I mean to hear the truth, so look me in the face and tell me at once, like a good child.'

Jenny had not yet recovered her usual spirits, and after thinking for a minute she came to the conclusion that it would be of no use trying to deceive Mrs. Scott, and that she had better speak the truth.

'I reckon I took it,' she said.

'And where did you take it from, Jenny?'

'I dunno.'

'Now, Jenny, that is not true; you know you took it from the rocks one day last summer, when we left you to watch the donkey.'

'Iss, I reckon I did,' was the reply.

'But that is stealing; and do you not know that it is very wrong to steal?'

''Twas a pretty little thing, and I wanted it,' said Jenny. 'I wish Mr. Burt hadn't taken it away.'

'Did you ever learn the eighth commandment, Jenny?'

'No, I dunno what that is.'

'The eighth commandment is: "Thou shalt not steal." Say it after me—"Thou—shalt—not—steal."'

Jenny repeated it.

'Do you know who says that?'

'You says it.'

'Yes, Jenny, but some one said it before me—the great God spoke those words.

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He says you must not steal—did you ever hear of God?'

'Iss, He do live up in the sky.'

'And do you know that He can always see you—that He sees all you do—He sees whenever you steal anything?'

'Do He?' said Jenny, looking up; 'then I'll wait till it's dark next time, afore I takes a thing, and then He won't see.'

'Come here, Jenny,' said Mrs. Scott, drawing Jenny close to her, and speaking slowly and gravely, astonished to find how ignorant she was. 'Do you know that the great, Holy God, can see you quite as well in the dark as in the light, that the darkness is not dark with Him, but the night is as clear as the day; there is not a moment of your life, when you are waking or when you are sleeping, that He does not see you; there is not a thought in your heart that He does not know, nor a word you speak that He does not hear; and the great and good God loves you, and it makes Him *very* sorry when He sees you stealing and doing wrong. I hope now when you get well that you will give up your bad ways, and learn to get an honest living, and try to please God; would not you like to please Him Who loves you so much?'

'I dunno,' said Jenny; 'I wonder why He loves me—I aint a-done nothing to make Him.'

'Do you think I love you, Jenny?'

Jenny thought a moment.

'Iss, I reckon you do; you've been good to me, and given me nice things, and taken care of me when I was bad.'

'And what have you done to make me love you, and treat you kindly—anything, do you think?'

'No,' said Jenny; 'but there, you're a good kind lady, that's how 'tis, I s'pose.'

'Well, Jenny, and so God is a good, kind God, *much more* good and kind than I am, and that is how He loves you.'

Mrs. Scott thought that this was enough talking for Jenny at one time, and she said no more to her then: but from time to time she gave her further instruction, and was pleased to find that Jenny received it readily, and seemed anxious to learn.

Mrs. Scott did not intend to let Jenny return to her old life—at least, if she could prevent it. And she had decided on what she thought would be the best plan for her. There had lately been opened in a town which was within a mile or two of Mrs. Scott's home, an institution for poor children, under the care of a kind, motherly matron, who made it a happy home for the children, and instructed them in all branches of useful knowledge, with the view of fitting them by-and-bye to be servants. During Jenny's illness Mrs. Scott had been making inquiries, and had learned that there was now a vacancy at Saint Meryn's Home, as it was called, and that Jenny might be admitted as soon as she was well enough to go. She easily obtained the consent of Jenny's mother, who was only too glad to get one child off her hands. And when she mentioned the plan to Jenny, she seemed pleased too.

Accordingly, when Mrs. Scott returned home after a six weeks' stay at North Pier, she took Jenny, who was now quite recovered, with her, and left her at the Home. Jenny was rather down-hearted when she had to say good-bye to her kind friend, and found herself in the midst of strangers; but she soon got over this feeling, and in a day or two felt quite at home. If you could have looked in upon her you would have heard her singing as merrily as the rest, as she stood at the washing-tray or scrubbed out a room, for they all worked with a will at Saint Meryn's.

Mrs. Scott visited the Home regularly once a-week, for she was one of the lady-managers, and was pleased to watch a steady improvement in Jenny, and to hear a good report of her from Miss Pepper, the matron. Once only, a few weeks after she came there, was Jenny guilty of an act of dishonesty. One of the girls missed something, and on their being all closely questioned by Miss Pepper, Jenny confessed to having taken it. A punishment was given her, and Miss Pepper talked to her kindly and seriously about it in private, showing her the sinfulness of her conduct in the sight of God; and Jenny, who was now better able to understand the difference between right and wrong, promised with many tears that she would

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never repeat the offence. And she kept her promise. As time went on, she grew to be a trustworthy, industrious girl, and, more than that, I believe she learnt to love and fear God truly, and to do all as in His sight, 'serving the Lord.'

At the end of two years Mrs. Scott took Jenny into her own family as nursemaid, and she continued with her for many years, proving a good servant, and never forgetting how much she owed to her kind mistress.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. X.] OCTOBER, 1871. [One Penny.

The Boy and the Pet Lamb.

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THE BOY AND THE PET LAMB.

THE Sunday morn was fair and bright;
The air was warm, the day was mild,
When, joyous in the summer light,
There stood a pretty child.

A pet-lamb with a little bell
Came by, a-tinkling as it went,
And by its gambols seemed to tell
'Twas quite as innocent.

'Twas sweet to mark the meeting there
Between the lambkin and the boy,
And seemingly their greetings were
A source of mutual joy.

The boy would stroke its curly fleece,
And hug it with his little arm,
The lamb would smell his white pelisse,
And neither felt alarm.

And then the lamb would give a tug,
As if it had some latent doubt
Of what was meant—another hug
Would make it skip about,

And toss, and shake its head, and ring
With its one bell a merry peal;
And then the boy would crow or sing,
And laugh with child-like zeal.

That Sunday morn was calm and bright,
No cloud obscured the heavens above,
On earth, the boy and lamb to sight
Seemed emblems of God's love.

H. T.

'LOVE THE TRUTH.'

A SHORT time ago I was visiting the children of a north-country workhouse, and I was much touched by hearing the following story, which I know to be perfectly true;—

'Two little girls of eleven and eight years old were admitted into the workhouse, their mother having been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for stealing, and their father thought it less trouble to pay for their being kept by the parish than to look after them himself. So he sent them into the workhouse.

'The poor children were found to be in a miserable state of dirt, and had evidently never known what a mother's love meant. It so happened that the mistress in charge of the children used to teach them to say the following hymn:—

"Speak the truth!
Falter not in thy reply,
Fear not any danger nigh;
Think of this,—that God is by,
In the glad time of thy youth,
Love the truth!

"Speak the truth!
Speak it boldly,—never fear;
Speak it so that all may hear;
In the end it shall appear
Truth is best in age and youth,
Speak the truth!"

'All the children appeared to be fond of this hymn, and each one of them, some only six years old, could repeat it correctly, and so it was much in their minds. But not one of them seemed to be so much struck with the meaning of the words as the teacher explained them, as Maggie, the younger of the two new little girls; and at last she came to the teacher, and bursting into tears, she said, "O ma'am, must I go out to mother again, and must I tell lies when she makes me? She sends me to beg at people's doors, and tells me I must cry, and say that my father and mother are dead, and then people will give me something. And, O ma'am, it's a lie."

'She seemed much distressed. God had taught her that she must speak the truth at all times. Her teacher felt grieved for her, though she was thankful that the good seed had been sown in her heart; but she did not know how such a little creature could withstand the temptations to which she would be exposed when the time came for her to join her wicked mother again.

'Still she continued to teach her the same truths, which the child was always eager to hear.

'The three months came to an end, and little Maggie was told by some boys belonging to the place, that they had seen her mother in the street.

'At once she came running to the oldest girl of her companions, in great distress. "O Lizzie," she said, "the lads say mother's come out, and I can't go and tell lies;" and then, as if a sudden thought flashed across her mind, she added, "Lizzie, do you think if I asked the Lord He'd take me?"

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'And her heavenly Father saw fit in His love to answer the little girl's prayer. Not many days after she was taken ill; no one thought her seriously ill, the doctor said it was only a child's ailment, but three days later she was seized with fits, and quite unconscious of all her suffering her sweet spirit departed. Her earnest desire was granted, for Jesus had folded to His bosom the little trembling lamb whose path had indeed been a thorny one, and who had learned to "love the truth."'

THE FOOLISH MOUSE.

From the German.

THE CAT.

LITTLE Mouse, with pretty black eyes,
Do not think that I 'm telling lies;
I love you so, I want to kiss you,
Come for a moment, mother won't miss you.

OLD MOUSE.

Child, I advise you not to go!

THE CAT.

Come, little pet, you do not know
What nice fat nuts I have for you;
All for one kiss, you 'll find it 's true.

LITTLE MOUSE.

Oh, mother, see how kind she is;
Please let me give her one little kiss.

OLD MOUSE.

Child, you 'll repent it if you go!

THE CAT.

Come, darling, see, I love you so;
I 've got sweet cakes here all for you.

LITTLE MOUSE.

Oh, mother, mother, what shall I do?
May I run to her just for a minute,
There couldn't be any mischief in it?

OLD MOUSE.

Child, it would be a dreadful blunder.

LITTLE MOUSE.

What could she do to me then, I wonder,
With such a pretty smiling face;
I 'll go a bit nearer, just a pace.

THE CAT.

Come, little silly one, come away.

LITTLE MOUSE.

Oh, mother, murder! help me, pray!
She 's squeezing me, she 's hurting me,
She 's got me tight, I can't get free.

OLD MOUSE.

Now it's too late to help you, child,
By cunning words and arts beguiled,
You would not take advice from me,
And I 've no power to set you free.

H. A. F.

THE BORDERERS.

KING JAMES I. of England and VIth of Scotland, was the first monarch who took the title of 'King of Great Britain.' He began to reign in A.D. 1603. Before that time England and Scotland were not ruled as now by one king or queen, but their peoples were foes instead of friends, and fought fierce battles against each other. Those especially who lived near the borders where the two countries touched, had constant feuds and struggles.

The chief wealth of these Borderers was their cattle and sheep, and often when a chieftain had gathered round his fort or castle some bold men, his sons, or servants, or tenants, he would make what was called 'a raid' on the village of some other chief, and if he could master him he would drive away his flocks and herds and make them his own. Every man was a soldier in those days, and he never knew how soon he would have to fight. Those were troublous times on the Borders. How much better it is now, when the fact that there is any difference between the two countries is almost forgotten, and when Queen Victoria reigns alike over England and Scotland. The Queen leaves her Scottish home of Balmoral one day—glides over the Borders in the swift railway train, and is welcomed the next day as warmly by the Southerners of Windsor as she had been by the Northerners of Aberdeen! How thankful we should be that we live in such quiet times, and that God hears the prayer which is so constantly offered in our churches—'Give peace in our time, O Lord.'

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Borderers returning Home. P. 147.

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'She raised it steadily to the lip of the old woman.' P. 150.

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A KIND-HEARTED CHILD.

THERE is near our house an old pump—a kind of town pump—which every one may use, and whose wet and bespattered base speaks plainer than sign-boards could do, of water for man and horse: and a very excellent pump it is, too—never out of order, easily worked, and furnishing some of the purest, clearest, coolest water in the world.

Many a thirsty schoolboy and omnibus-driver has refreshed himself at that pump. The hackman and draymen stop there; and the old iron ladle that hangs by its side has been pressed by many a rosy lip.

It is no unusual thing, just after school hours, to see some little fellow, with his satchel over his shoulder, working away at the handle for ten minutes at a time, till all who have gathered round it have had a drink. But yesterday the old pump was honoured as though an angel had blessed it. A rosy-cheeked girl, half hid in a flood of golden curls, came bouncing by, driving her hoop, just as the old, decrepit apple-woman at the corner, whom everybody knows, was trying to get a drink. She had set down her basket, but bent nearly double by the weight of her years and troubles, she was still compelled to lean upon her staff. The little girl saw the difficulty, and was in an instant at the handle. Holding the ladle till it was filled, she raised it steadily to the lip of the old woman, whose warm, grateful thanks called the crimson to the child's cheek, which, as she hurried away, was deepened by finding that her kind deed had been observed.

We shall long remember that girl, and the pleasant way in which she did a good and kind action to the aged, and doubtless she had her reward. It brought to our mind that verse of Scripture which says, 'Whosoever shall give a cup of water in the name of Christ shall not lose his reward.'

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

THE DAMSEL IN THE HOUSE OF CAIAPHAS.

MOST young readers of the New Testament know that no woman is there mentioned as having spoken against our Blessed Lord during His life on earth, or as having taken any part in bringing about His death. But a damsel, whose name we are not told, sided with His enemies, so far as to point out St. Peter to their notice as one of the followers of the despised Jesus of Nazareth.

This maiden was a servant in the household of Caiaphas, the high-priest, and from St. John's Gospel (xviii. 16, 17) we find that she was the portress to whom was intrusted the duty of keeping the gate of her master's house in Jerusalem. To us it seems strange to hear of a woman being so employed, but among the Jews it was a common custom. Large mansions were closed next the street by heavy folding-gates, in which was a light wicket-gate, only just large enough to allow one person to pass through at a time, and easily opened and closed by a woman. It was by this gate that people entered the large paved hall (or, as we in these days should call it, the court-yard), open to the sky above and inclosed on all sides by the dwelling itself.

In the high-priest's house there was most likely, at one end of the court-yard, and raised a few steps above it, a large room open in front, so that those in the room could hear and see whatever was going on in the court outside. Here, shortly before midnight, our Blessed Lord had been brought, after being betrayed by Judas and seized by the chief priest's officers and servants; and here He was tried before Caiaphas, with whom *were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes* (St. Mark, xiv. 53).

Crowds of excited Jews were eagerly trying to pass into the court-yard, and

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never before, perhaps, had the *damsel that kept the door* been so tried as on that most eventful night, when through her gate had been led the meek and patient Captive, Jesus of Nazareth. Together with those who had led Him from Gethsemane to the house of Caiaphas, the damsel had admitted one of our Lord's followers, known to her as 'John, the son of Zebedee,' and to us as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' She had let St. John pass in because, being *known to the high-priest*, he had often been in the house before. And a short time after, at his entreaty, she consented to admit his fellow-disciple St. Peter, who was standing outside in the street. When this stranger passed through the wicket-gate the light in the damsel's hand must have shone upon his face, and we can well believe that she would take special notice of his countenance. He ventured to go no further than the court-yard, but St. John, being well known to the servants, probably pressed forward and went up close to the trial-chamber, being thus an eye-witness of all that happened to his beloved Master, even to the very end.

In a little interval of quiet, perhaps, when for a time men had ceased hurrying in and out at the gate, the damsel joined a group of servants and officers who had gathered round a charcoal fire, which on that chilly night they had lighted in the midst of the court-yard. Among her fellow-servants she saw, sitting with his face to the fire, the man whom she had let in at St. John's request. *Earnestly looking upon him she said*, to the servants and officers, *This man was also with Him* (St. Luke, xxii. 56); and then, speaking to St. Peter, she went on to say, *Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth* (St. Mark, xiv. 57). *Art thou not also one of this man's disciples?* (St. John, xviii. 17). Being quite certain that this was the man whom she had closely observed when letting him in, she must have greatly wondered when he rudely denied it, saying *I am not* (St. John); *Woman, I know Him not* (St. Luke); *Neither understand I what thou sayest* (St. Mark). Then, to escape further notice, *he went out into the porch* (the covered way under the front of the house, and leading from the court to the gate), *and the cock crew*. But he took no heed at the sound, and so he did not then remember how his Lord had warned him that he would three times deny Him before the cock should crow twice that night.

The second denial seems to have been uttered to the same damsel when she questioned him again (St. Mark, xiv. 69), as well as to another maid (St. Matt. xxvi. 71), and to some of the officers of the high-priest, but this time St. Peter denied with an oath. The third denial was spoken in the court-yard about an hour after, when a relation of Malchus (the servant whose ear he had cut off) asked, *Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?* (St. John, xviii. 26); and when the disciple again denied his Lord, his words only convinced them the more that he was truly a native of Galilee. *Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man;* and while he was yet speaking, the cock crew a second time. Jesus was still standing bound in the room at the end of the court-yard, waiting to be brought before the council of the Jews, and, at the sound, *the Lord turned and looked upon Peter*, with a look such as no words can describe, and no thought of man can conceive. *And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly* (St. Luke, xvii. 61, 62), his tears being the signs of true and deep repentance before God.

As the penitent thief is the one instance in Holy Scripture of conversion to God at the last hour of life, so the repentance of St. Peter is the one instance of a return to God after denying Jesus Christ. That one so true-hearted should have fallen so low, is a thought to humble us whenever we are tempted to make sure that nothing could draw us aside from the path of duty to God; and that one who had thus fallen should be restored to his place among the apostles, is a thought to comfort us if a fall into sin has ever led us to despair of being forgiven by our kind Father who is in Heaven.

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The Damsel in the house of Caiaphas.

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Mother, we can't all go.'

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'MOTHER, WE CAN'T ALL GO.'

ON a sunny afternoon in September there was to be a treat given to the children attending a small school in one of the most remote of the moorland parishes of the Peak of Derbyshire.

There had been a great many busy little people helping for some days in making letters of leaves for texts of Holy Scripture and other choice words, which were to be placed on the walls over and between the maps and pictures.

Several of the elder children had gone often into the woods close by, to pick the beautiful bright red berries of the wild rose, and gather clumps of moss from the roots of the trees, and sprigs of oak and box for devices and wreaths.

During the early hours of morning there was quite a hum of happy voices to be heard in the room, and every one there seemed to have much to do and more to think of. Little Charlotte Wall and Mary Spence, who had been the chief workers, were almost too full of joy at the sight of the pretty room, to be able to take notice of the large loaves of home-made bread, and beautiful plum-cakes which had been laid on the tables by their parents; and yet they laughed heartily enough when they saw their playmates come tripping along the paths, looking as if school had no sad memories for them.

By-and-bye, in the afternoon, the Vicar and his wife and daughter, started with a few friends towards the distant hamlet of the parish where the tea was to be given.

At the foot of a long steep hill, the pony-carriage pulled up at the toll-gate, to see if the little ones had gone before. Now by some mischance the clock had stopped, and the time was not known to be so far on in the day. There were six to be dressed and made ready; baby looking as if he would like to be of the party as well. In a short time, faces were washed, hair was combed, Sunday frocks and jackets were put on, and some of the younger ones packed in the front and back seats of the carriage, alongside of the toys and parcels of prize books and cards.

The pretty white pony, who had stood patiently waiting for his blithe little friends, was on the point of starting with his load, when one inmate of the cottage, the eldest son, a child of nine years old, had a word to say.

The pale, wan face of little Dan Ridge wore a quiet, gentle smile, as its good little owner watched the party of brothers and sisters making ready for their walk; when all were moving off, he looked into his kind mother's face, and in the sweetest, tenderest tone of his musical voice he said,—

'Mother, we can't all go. You will stay by me!'

The healthy, merry ones sped on their joyous errand, leaving little Dan to the loving care of mother, till father could come and nurse him awhile at eventide.

When Mrs. Ridge could be spared, she hurried on through the beautiful valley to the lovely spot where the entertainment was given. The children had been served with their tea, and had already begun to play at various games in a large meadow, when Mrs. Ridge arrived. Soon little knots of twos and threes came running round her to ask after their little playfellow, who was not able to be with them.

In a few kinds words Mrs. Ridge told them how ill Dan was, and that she feared he would not get better again. Faces which had been very bright were saddened at hearing this piece of unwelcome news, and many were the regrets at the absence of one who used to be the gayest amongst the scholars.

As the time of return drew on, there were short whisperings going on amongst most of the children, and on inquiry they turned out to be about poor little Dan. Toys which had been won in races; cards and books which had been given for good conduct, small handkerchiefs, and slices of cake, were gathered and given for the little patient sufferer, and many were the messages sent by the children to their companion who was sick.

On reaching the toll-house where Dan

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lived, there was the sound of voices through the door left ajar, and, as could be heard, two were singing together the words of the evening hymn,—

'Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear!'

Father and son were thus passing the time till the absent ones returned from the treat. When one by one the little brothers and sisters ran to the couch, showing the presents sent, and prattling out the kind messages, Dan's eyes began to moisten with tears of joy.

The brave little fellow forgot his pains for the moment, and scarcely could be kept from trying to spin the top and throw the ball which had been sent by his friends. When, however, the God-fearing father took down from the shelf the Family Bible, little Dan at once laid aside his toys, and took his part in the closing prayers of that humble evening worship, which was never omitted in this happy and well-ordered home.

In a week or two it was found that the cause of little Dan's illness was a sunstroke; which had happened whilst helping his father at harvest time. The symptoms grew rapidly more alarming, Dan's eyesight was taken from him, then he was confined to his bed. The doctor began to see that hope of life was gone, and used every means in his power to soothe the sufferings of his youthful patient.

Frequently the kind Vicar came to see Dan, and talked to him about the Saviour, Who loved little children, and called them His lambs. Dan was fond of the kind words, and said that they made him feel very happy. Every now and then he would repeat a line of some hymn which he had learned at school, and sing it over and over again, as if it were sweeter each time he sang it.

Early in November, in a little leaf-strewn grave beneath some lofty elms, in the pretty village church-yard of his parish, Dan Ridge was laid to rest by sorrowing parents and friends, whose comfort is that God has again fulfilled His Word which says, 'Thy children shall come again to their own border.' Jer. xxxi. 17. D.R.N.

SUNDAY.

Adapted from the German.

WHEN the pleasant church-bell rings,
Mother, she puts on her things,
'Church time now,' she says, 'good-bye,
Be good children, do not cry:'
I 'm too small, they say, to go,
I must wait until I grow,
Peeping, tiptoe, through the pane,
Till my mother comes again.

Oh, it seems so long to wait
Till I see her at the gate!
Then she comes in straight to me,
Takes me up upon her knee,
Tells me what she saw and heard,
Makes it easy, every word,
That a little child may know
Something about Jesus so.

For in church they tell of Him,
How He saved us all from sin;
Daily still for us He cares,
That we 're good, and say our prayers,
Watches o'er us constantly,
Father, mother, yes, and me.

And I like to sing and pray
As they sang in church to-day,
Mother always helping me,
It may make me good, you see;
For I am not good always,
Often I have naughty days.

All the long, long work-day week,
Father scarce has time to speak
To his child, yet he is good,
For he works to buy me food,
Bread and milk so nice and sweet,
And for dinner, often meat.

But the Sundays, they are best!
Then I 'm very neatly dressed,
And I take dear father's hand,
And we wander through the land;
First the garden, then the lane,
Then the fields, and home again.

And he shows me everything,
Nests of little birds that sing,
Pretty flowers, I 've never seen,
Caterpillars brown and green,
And he tells me that God sees,
Loves, too, tiny things like these.

So I 'm glad when Sunday's here,
All the week I wish it near,
And I only want to grow
Just a little bigger—so,
That when pleasant church-bells ring
I may also pray and sing. H. A. F.

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The Crutch.

MISS BURTON'S SCHOOL-CHILDREN.

(*Continued from page* 134.)

SOME days passed, and still Miss Burton had not settled how to do good to the Wright family without giving offence, when something happened which put the whole affair out of her head for the time.

Grace, poor crippled Grace, never came home from school one day; dinner-time passed, and Aunt Patience thought she

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Miss Burton discovering Grace.

must have been kept in as a punishment, though such a thing had never happened before. When tea-time came, and no Grace, she became alarmed, and went into the village to ask after her. There she was surprised and shocked to find that Grace had left the school as usual at twelve o'clock, and taken the path homewards: no one in the village had seen or spoken to her since; but just as Miss

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Patience Carden reached the school a boy came running up with the poor child's crutch.

'I found it behind a hedge on the Barford Road, master,' he said, putting it in the schoolmaster's hand, 'and I knew that it was the little girl's at the Lodge; and whatever can she be doing without it?'

The Barford Road was in quite the opposite direction to that which Grace would take on her walk home, so this only added to everyone's wonder.

Then, too, fresh dangers were feared from the fact that Grace had carried home a rather large sum of money that morning, no less than thirty shillings, payment due to Aunt Patience for some very fine knitting done for a lady in the village.

When Miss Patience heard this, she wrung her hands, and declared that her little one was certainly murdered by wicked people for the sake of the money.

All the village turned out to look out for the missing child. For a long time no trace could be seen of her; dusk came on, happily soon to give place to moonlight, but still no Grace could be found. At last Miss Burton discovered her, where every one else had thought it useless to look, — in a private road to Trent Hall, which had long been walled in and the gates locked, so that it was thought impossible for Grace to get there at all. And how she could have climbed the high wall was a mystery to Miss Burton, when she came on the poor, chilled, frightened little creature, who burst into tears on seeing her.

Miss Burton could not get her to speak for sobbing, so she helped her to the lodge as quickly as she could, meaning to give the child some warm tea and put her to bed, and hoping that, when she was a little calmer, she would be able to tell what had happened to her.

On nearing the lodge, Miss Burton found that it was empty, but Jemima Wright was hovering about, having come to see if Grace had been found.

It was a comfort to find any one to help, and Jemima tried to make herself useful by boiling the kettle and undressing Grace, who still wept bitterly.

While Miss Burton went into the lodge-kitchen to look for tea and sugar Jemima sat upstairs with Grace, and then the lost child seemed to grow calmer, for Miss Burton heard the sounds of conversation, though the words did not reach her ear.

'Was it our Ned?' asked Jemima, eagerly. 'Oh, don't tell on him if it was. I'll get you the money back,—father has lots of a Saturday, and I could make it up in a week or two.'

Grace made some low reply, when Jemima began again:

'Another bigger lad with him? then you needn't say nothing about our Ned; you won't, will you, Grace?—you, who said as you were sorry for me because my mother used to beat me.'

But Grace, who had been greatly terrified, began to cry again, and Miss Burton called to Jemima to run to the village and tell Miss Patience that her child was found.

Jemima was very unwilling to go, and she had not gone far before she met Miss Patience on her way home, and returned with her. Not heeding that lady's look of surprise, Jemima followed her to Grace's bedroom, and listened tremblingly while Miss Patience drew out Grace's story from her.

She said that she was going quietly home when two big boys met her, and the biggest snatched her bag from her, and she cried out, 'Oh, don't, that's Aunt Patience's money,' but he took it all away, and told her to follow him. Then she felt too frightened to move, so he snatched her up, and carried her through the plantations a long way till they came to a high wall, which he dragged her over, and then left her, saying, 'There, you'll not easily find your way home to tell of us.' Grace had tried to find her way home, but her crutch was gone, and she got on so slowly that she lay down and cried again, and when she woke it was moonlight, and she grew more frightened, and then Miss Burton came.

'And who was the big lad?' asked Miss Patience; 'did you know him, child?'

'No,' said Grace, her pale face flushing.

Jemima gave a sigh of relief.

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'I daresay it was some tramp, who took Barford Road afterwards, and threw your crutch away there to mislead us all: but we'll have the police after him,' said Miss Patience. 'Why, you might have caught your death of cold, lying out there; to say nothing of the money. Now go to sleep, child; and you, Jemima girl, it's time you were in bed: you had better be off.'

How it came about no one knew, but everyone could see that, from the day Grace Carden had been robbed on her way from school, she and Jemima Wright had become fast friends.

Miss Patience even was touched by the way in which Jemima had called to inquire after Grace, who had suffered from a severe cold through her exposure, and since the big, rough lad, Ned, had been away some time, at work in a Barford mill it was said, Grace had now and then been allowed to visit Jemima, though why she liked going to that dirty cottage, Aunt Patience said she could not guess.

Strange as it may seem, however, there was a bond of friendship between the clean tidy maiden, and the poor, uncombed, ragged girl, and each was doing the other good.

Poor Jemima's black hands were still blacker the afternoon of Grace's expected visit; but the kitchen-floor was clean, newly scrubbed to make it look more like the kitchen at the lodge, and the window-panes were brighter, too, than was their wont, for Grace was bringing a bit of new muslin for a blind, hemmed by herself, but the gift of Miss Burton.

Grace, also, was learning to do good, always a happy lesson, and she was escaping one great danger of a solitary, well-cared-for child, that of thinking too much of herself and her own comforts.

The affair of the robbery was not forgotten, but the police had been unable to trace the thieves; for, though Grace had been questioned several times, her answers had been so confused that little could be made of them.

Jemima Wright alone had guessed that her brother Ned had been one of the culprits, and her great desire was to get Grace, if questioned, to deny the fact.

'You might just do that,' she pleaded, 'for you say yourself it wasn't Ned who snatched the purse from you; he only held it while the other lad carried you; and if you say that Ned was there at all, he'll get put into jail, and jail's a dreadful place, they say.'

Poor Jemima! with all her neglected bringing up, she loved her rough brother, and, perhaps, she was about the one creature in the world he cared for.

But Grace would not promise to tell a lie. Mother had told her she was never to do that, but she would say nothing, if asked, about that second boy. Would that do?

(To be continued.)

A TRUE STORY.

A LOVELY little blue-eyed boy,
Not six years old by many moons,
Sat on a bank, and smiled with joy
On all he saw: his smiles were boons
To one who watched him thankfully—
His mother—from a window nigh.

She watched him sitting on the bank,
Alone awhile; but soon came near
Some stranger children, and then sank,
A moment's space, her heart with fear,
Lest her dear boy should disobey,
And with them join in hurtful play.

She sat and watched him, wondering much
That still he stayed, and seemed to talk
As if he stopped their toys to touch,
Or with them on the green to walk.
Some minutes passed, and still he stayed:
His mother's heart grew half afraid.

At length she beckoned anxiously,
And called her darling boy by name,
And saw with joy how readily
At her request he running came,—
'And what,' she asked, 'has made you stay
With those strange boys across the way?'

'Why, mother dear, I'll tell you true:
Those boys a cockchafer had caught,
And with a pin had pierced it through,
And when it whizzed around they thought
'Twas *fun*, and called me near to see;
But I said "No—'twas *cruelty!*"

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'And then they laughed at me; but I
Asked them if they would like a sword
Run *through their* bodies?—would their cry
Mean fun or pain? And at that word
They the poor cockchafer let go,
And then I called them *good*, you know!'

S. E. M.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XI.] NOVEMBER, 1871. [One Penny.

The Little Tramp.

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THE LITTLE TRAMP.

HOW cosily the fire burned on the hearth, how cheerful and comfortable were the whole surroundings of the school-room, where sat at their usual five-o'clock tea, with their governess, Georgie, Herbert, and little May Penrose.

'You should have seen, Herbert,' said Georgie, a little girl of about twelve years of age, 'those dreadful tramps we met when we were out with Miss Benson this afternoon.'

'How many were there?' asked Herbert.

'Oh, a man and a woman, and two little horrid, ragged children! and they came almost inside our gate.'

'I should have ordered them out again in pretty quick time if I had been there,' said Herbert, who, having just been promoted from the home school-room to a boys' day-school in the neighbouring town, gave himself some airs, and seemed rather grand in his sister's eyes.

'And I would, if I had liked to,' replied Georgie, 'only they were such horrid-looking people I was afraid to speak to them.'

'Who are these horrid-looking people of whom you are speaking?' asked Mrs. Penrose, who just at that moment entering the room, caught the last words her little girl had spoken.

Mrs. Penrose often joined her children at their school-room tea. It was a half-hour in the day which they greatly enjoyed, and many were the lamentations if other engagements obliged her to be absent. It was an hour in which she encouraged her children to tell her all that had interested them during the day, either in their lessons or in their walks. Georgie, therefore, at once began to tell her mother of the tramps they had met that afternoon, and was in the middle of a long description of their 'horrid' looks, as she described them, when the servant who had been the children's nurse as long as they were nursery children, and now waited on them in their school-room, entered with a fresh supply of bread-and-butter. Georgie, in her excitement about the tramps, and eager to have her words confirmed, called out to her, as she was again leaving the room,—

'Nurse, don't you think tramps horrid people?'

'No, Miss Georgie; some tramps may be bad people, but all tramps need not be bad.'

'Oh, Nursie does not think tramps horrid people, I know,' said little May, 'for Nursie always gives them pennies whenever they come to our door; don't you, Nursie?' But nurse had already left the room.

Mrs. Penrose, having heard all that her little girl had to say, replied,—

'Now, Georgie, you have told me your story, and I will first say that I do not like to hear my little girl call any people "horrid-looking," or "bad," without knowing more about them than you can know by merely seeing them on the road; and I think that perhaps I can tell you a story which may teach you all how you ought to speak of any poor little children who have no happy, comfortable home like that which God has given you.'

'O mother, do tell us the story,' chimed in all the children together; 'and is it anything that happened to you when you were a child?'

'Yes, my dears, it is about something that happened to me when I was just your age, Georgie; and when you come downstairs presently I will tell you my story.'

About half-an-hour later the children were seated round their mother in the drawing-room, anxiously expecting the promised story. Mrs. Penrose began,—

'You all know that your grandfather was a clergyman. We lived in the country, and I used often to accompany him on his walks in the parish. One afternoon, I remember it so well, we were entering the village on our return homewards. On one side of the road, beneath the shelter of the hedge, sat a little girl about four years of age. Not far off, on the road, stood two other children, a boy and a girl, who might have been two or three years older. The afternoon was

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cold, for it was the middle of November, and it was now getting dusk, and the little child under the hedge looked white and tired. As we drew near I exclaimed to my father, "Oh, those are the same children I saw here when I walked out with Miss Burns before dinner;" Miss Burns was my governess. We approached the little girl, and my father asked her name. She replied quickly, and without shyness, that her name was Katie. "Where is your mother?" asked my father. "Up there, drinking beer," answered the poor little child, as she pointed towards the public-house.

'I remember my father's look of pity at the child's reply. He told me afterwards that it shocked him so deeply to hear from the innocent lips of a mere baby words which, without the child's knowing it, told the guilt of her own mother. He said he was contrasting in his own mind the lot of these poor children with that of his own little ones at home, and asking himself why these should be so blessed, while those seemed left by the wayside to perish. My father asked a few more questions of the elder children. They were true to the only schooling they had known, and told some lies in a whining voice. He then took them to a shop which was close at hand, and gave them food, telling the shopkeeper to send and inform him if the mother did not soon join the children. As we passed through the village, and turned by the church, on our way down the lane which led to the Vicarage, a man, and a woman with an infant in her arms, came out of the public-house. The man followed us, and began to beg. I need not tell you how my father reproved him for his conduct to his children. The man sullenly replied that they were none of his, and that, if he got nothing else, it was not preaching that he asked for, and with these words he moved away. So we returned home.

'One incident which is important to the close of my story I have not yet told you. As we were talking to the children, one of the farmers of the parish, for whom my father had a great respect, drove past on his way from market, accompanied by his wife. He stopped his horse on seeing us, and my father told him about the children. Not long before they had lost their only little girl, and I suppose Mrs. Jones thought she saw in the little child by the roadside some resemblance to her own lost little girl, for I could see that she was crying while Farmer Jones talked to my father.

(*Concluded in our next.*)

A LESSON.

DO you paint your *Prizes?*'

This was the question I heard a little girl ask one day of her young friend, and to the little friend's answer of 'No,' I heard the following, almost as I write it, though I have here and there put in, or left out a little.

'Oh, don't you? We always do; there's nothing we like so well on wet days or in winter as painting our *Prizes* and *Chatterboxes*. They are so lovely painted. They are very pretty without, but when they are coloured, the little children look so sweet, and the babies and the mothers too . . . . Oh, and especially the flowers! But only look for yourself; here are some Volumes and some Numbers that we have been painting in this morning.'

'Oh,' exclaimed the other voice, 'how lovely! I never saw such a difference. My brothers and I paint sometimes, but we make the things look such a sight; we are not allowed to paint in our books, or anything worth keeping.'

'Well, it was almost so with us when we first wished to paint our *Prizes*. Mother said they were too good for us to spoil by messing our paints on them, but father said that perhaps if we had a little teaching about how to do it, we might really make them look very pretty. So sometimes he, and sometimes mother, would look over a bit and tell us how to do it.'

'What colours to put?' said the other. 'Oh, what a bother! I like to paint *as* I like.'

'Oh, yes, so do we; but I mean they told us a few things at first, and now we don't want much help. I mean that they said that children generally spoil a print by

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putting such loads of colour on, and hiding up all the lights and shades. So you see we put very little colour on.'

'But they look very bright!'

'Yes, because we don't smother the lights by too much colour; and at very bright places we leave a little white, or wipe the colour off again with our painting cloth. Then, too, father taught us not to wash the paint always out of our brush when we have done the one or two little bits of the colour that was wanted in one picture. We have several open before us, and if we have blue in the brush we go on using it on one or other till it is done. Also he told us that more mixture of colours than

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The Naughty Spaniel. Page 167.

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children usually put makes it look better. Instead of making the ground all brown or all green, we dash down the rest of the green, brown, yellow, or lake, upon the foregrounds, roadsides, and so on. It looks much more natural, because, except just in early Spring, not even a grass field is one even sheet of green, but there will be butter-cups or sorrel, and dead leaves or poppies, or something to vary the colour everywhere.'

'But I think I should make it look very messy if I did so!' replied the visitor.

'Oh, then we need not think about that yet. I should not have tried to teach you that so soon. Father did not with us. The first thing he taught us was just to avoid putting on such thickness of colour, on the boots and shoes especially. You know how often they are spoiled with children's blacking them. They lose all the shine which they had in the print; but I do not think you will say that ours do in our painted *Prizes*. See here, father did those boots!'

And the two friends looked over a few numbers, and I heard many a note of admiration from one side, and sometimes an apology from the other.

'This one little Willie painted, but we ought not to have left him to do it by himself. Sometimes, if we look over him, he can do a little quite well, without going over the outline. This one I did before I knew that we must not use the least bit of lake in faces or hands, or else people look blue, as there is blue in lake. Did you ever see such a queer complexion as this girl has?'

'Well, I see it does look odd if I compare it with our faces and hands!' and the young voices burst into a merry laugh. 'But do you know, my brother and I almost always put lake for anything pink!'

'Oh, lake is for skies and for flowers, and to mix with other colours to make purple or sunset, but never for flesh.'

'What do you use then?'

'Oh, we use light red or Venetian red for men and boys, and very pale vermilion for ladies and babies, and a little vermilion for cheeks. It makes them look so lively. Some of the prints of pictures at the Exhibitions in the *Illustrated News* look very well when we have painted them, and father says it really teaches us a good deal, for we have to think of what colour roads, and way-sides, and mountains are; and then we find out from nature, and that interests him and mother, and all of us in our walks. Here is one of a sunset under trees!'

'Oh, I don't care for landscapes; but that does look very pretty! How did you do the trees so well?'

'We had only to put a thin wash of green, dipping the brush into some thin yellow at the bright parts. It is all done with a brush *full* of thin colour out of a saucer or shell (for we use as many of one as the other), and not taken dry off a plate, as we used to do. Our sea-side shells come in useful, you see.'

'I can't think, though, how you make it look so well. That child looks real!'

'That is because the print is so good. It is the artist who draws the print, and puts the lights and shades so well, that it only wants the tinge of colour to make it look real. It is very pleasant to see such pictures grow under our fingers. Here is a coloured and an uncoloured print of the same subject.'

'Well, it is worth the trouble of learning.'

'If it is a trouble,' said the other voice.

'Now, how do you paint hair? I always make my people look as if they had dipped their heads in the mud or a pitch-kettle!'

'Too much colour, that is all. A thin wash of black, brown, or yellow-ochre, if it is to be light hair, is enough; then you see the light shining on it just as the artist and the engraver left it.'

'But you put more colour at some places, don't you? Here is a dark dress; you will use more over the folds, I suppose, than you will on the light parts?'

'We should put just the same wash over all, indeed. The shade on the print makes the difference between the light part and the folds, and so it will do when the colour is laid on. As father would say, "We shall leave the difference between them just the same, if we put our colour all

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equally." If we do not, we alter the picture, and we may be sure we should not improve it by so doing.'

'Well,' was the conclusion, 'I am sure you improve your books by what you do, and I shall try to colour mine too. Which is the easiest to begin with?'

'A border, I think. We began with a border in the *Prize*. There was a pale yellow primrose, and some little flowers round. They were very easy, and so pretty, and you know what the colours are by the flowers. Now in painting the people you have to take a little care in choosing your colours, so as not to make them gaudy or in bad taste.'

'Just as one would do in dressing a doll, or oneself, I suppose. Not a purple dress with a blue shawl?'

'Yes, and if one is not thinking, one gets too many colours in one picture.'

'How dark you make some of the people! I believe this man's face is done with sepia! I never saw such a dark man!'

'Ah, but father has, for he has been in Syria.'

'Oh, I see, it is a Bible picture, and so of course all the people are dark, even the little baby is darker than an English one.'

'Yes, and I assure you it makes it very interesting to have to remember things like that. It makes painting our *Prizes* quite a pleasant play-work for all of us.'

J. E. C. F.

THE NAUGHTY SPANIEL.

SOME King Charles' spaniels are very amusing and intelligent. The one in the picture when caught doing wrong lies down on his back and waits till his master punishes him; one day he got on the table and upset the milk-jug on to the floor; the jug broke and the milk spilt: on seeing this he jumped down and lay by the side of it, looking very penitent, till his master had scolded him. When any of us have done anything wrong, we are wise if we at once confess our fault, as the little dog did!

THE WATER-MILL.

ANY grist for the Mill?'
How merrily it goes!
Flap, flap, flap, flap,
While the water flows.
Round-about, and round-about,
The heavy mill-stones grind,
And the dust flies all about the Mill,
And makes the Miller blind.

'Any grist for the Mill?'
The jolly farmer packs
His waggon with a heavy load
Of very heavy sacks.
Noisily, oh, noisily,
The mill-stones turn about;
You cannot make the Miller hear
Unless you scream and shout.

'Any grist for the Mill?'
The bakers come and go;
They bring their empty sacks to fill,
And leave them down below.
The dusty Miller and his men
Fill all the sacks they bring,
And while they go about their work
Right merrily they sing.

'Any grist for the Mill?'
How quickly it goes round!
Splash, splash, splash, splash,
With a whirring sound.
Farmers, bring your corn to-day;
And, bakers, buy your flour;
Dusty millers, work away,
While it is in your power.

'Any grist for the Mill?'
Alas! it will not go;
The river, too, is standing still,
The ground is white with snow.
And when the frosty weather comes,
And freezes up the streams,
The Miller only hears the Mill,
And grinds the corn, in dreams.

Living close beside the Mill,
The Miller's girls and boys
Always play at make-believe,
Because they have no toys.
'Any grist for the Mill?'
The elder brothers shout,
While all the little Petticoats
Go whirling round about.

The Miller's little boys and girls
Rejoice to see the snow.
'Good father, play with us to-day;
You cannot work, you know.

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The Water-mill.

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Rhoda.

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We will be the mill-stones,
And you shall be the wheel;
We'll pelt each other with the snow,
And it shall be the meal.'

Oh, heartily the Miller's wife
Is laughing at the door;
She never saw the Mill worked
So merrily before.
'Bravely done, my little lads!
Rouse up the lazy wheel;
For money comes but slowly in
When snow-flakes are the meal.'

DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

RHODA.

THE damsel Rhoda, whose name means 'a rose,' was most probably a servant, and dwelt in Jerusalem. Like the maiden of whom we had a picture last month, she is spoken of in Holy Scripture as a door-keeper, whose duty it was one night to let St. Peter enter into the house where she lived. On the night when the Apostle answered the one damsel, he only *supposed* himself ready to lay down his life for his Master's sake. (St. John, xiii. 37, 38.) But when, about fourteen years afterwards, he spoke to the other, he was most truly ready to do so. Then, too, the one maiden was servant to Caiaphas, who was one of our Lord's greatest enemies, but the other belonged to a household in which, after His ascension into heaven, Jesus was honoured and worshipped as the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind.

Rhoda lived in the family of Mary, the sister of St. Barnabas and the mother of John Mark (Acts, xii. 12). Just as St. Barnabas had shown his love for his fellow-Christians by selling his land and giving them the money (Acts, iv. 36, 37), so his sister Mary helped them by letting them use her house as a gathering-place in which to offer up their prayers and their praises to God. When it was known that Herod the king *had killed James the brother of John with the sword* (Acts, xii. 2), and that he was keeping St. Peter in prison to suffer the same fate, Mary's house was one of those in which *prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him* (verse 5). At a late hour of the very night before the day fixed for his death, *many were gathered together praying* for him in this home of the Church, when suddenly there sounded through the court-yard and all the rooms surrounding it, a loud knocking at the door that opened into the street. The times were so full of danger to the followers of Jesus Christ, that when Rhoda went into the porch she did not dare to open the wicket-gate and look out, but only inquired who was there. She listened most anxiously for the answer, and, to her intense surprise, the voice that replied was St. Peter's. She knew it well, and no doubt had often listened to it in the room where prayers were now being offered up for the Apostle's safety. *And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate* (verse 14). *And they said unto her, Thou art mad.* But she knew the voice so well that she assured them she was not mistaken. *Then said they, It is his angel.* Perhaps they thought that he had been put to death in prison, and that his spirit had been allowed to visit the place where his friends were gathered together. Or, as is more likely, they thought that his guardian angel had taken St. Peter's form and voice, and had come either to comfort them for his loss, or to bid them continue earnest in prayer for his deliverance.

All this time St. Peter was knocking and waiting to be let in, wondering, no doubt, why Rhoda had gone back into the house after finding out that it was he who stood at the door. As it has been said, 'There was really more difficulty in getting admission into the house of a friend, even after his presence had been made known, than there had been in getting away from the prison, with its chains, and bolts, and bars, and guard of soldiers.' At length those who had gathered together in the house went to the porch and cautiously opened

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the wicket-gate. And when they saw that it was indeed Peter who stood outside *they were astonished*, and began eagerly to ask him questions as soon as he was safe within the house. We can well imagine that all spoke together in their haste to explain how it was that he had been kept so long at the door. The sound of so many voices of men and women prevented St. Peter from making himself heard; so *he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison* (verse 17). Great indeed must have been Rhoda's wonder and gladness whilst she listened to the story. But not for long could St. Peter venture to remain, even in that friendly house; and as soon as he had finished telling them about his miraculous deliverance, *he said, Go, show these things unto James* (the Bishop, as we should now call him, of Jerusalem), *and to the brethren.* Then he left them, and in order to hide from Herod *he went into another place;* the house, perhaps, of a Christian in some distant town.

All we know about Rhoda is told us in three verses of the Bible, but from that short account we can find at least two things which it is well for us to notice. First, we see that, like many young people, she allowed surprise and joy to take away her presence of mind. We should begin, as early as possible in life, to try and be always calm and ready, so that nothing, however sudden, may take from us the power of thinking quickly what it would be best to do, and of doing it at once. For want of this Rhoda risked the life of St. Peter, by leaving him where his enemies might easily have made him prisoner again. But, secondly, we see how strong was the faith of this Christian damsel. It was she alone who, at the very first sound of the Apostle's voice at the door, believed that God had indeed answered the prayers of His Church. The great lesson which her example teaches us is this; nothing is impossible to those who believe and pray, because nothing is impossible to God to Whom they pray.

MISS BURTON'S SCHOOL-CHILDREN.

(*Concluded from page* 159.)

TO say nothing, however, is sometimes very difficult when you have a policeman asking you twenty questions, one after the other, as happened to Grace next day.

Poor Grace! she had never had a secret before, and she felt so bewildered and guilty when Aunt Patience said, 'Speak up, child, and answer Mr. Briggs.'

But she got out of it safe at last, for Mr. Briggs said it didn't matter that day, but Grace must be sure to be at Barford next Thursday to appear before the magistrates, as a young man had been taken up for robbing a till in a shop, and it was thought he might have also taken the money from Grace.

Then Mr. Briggs gave Aunt Patience a paper, and went away.

Grace now began to feel terribly frightened about Thursday. What should she do? and suppose they had caught Ned, must she say he had helped too, when it would grieve Jemima so much? She tried to put the question in a very roundabout way to Aunt Patience, who answered, 'I don't know what nonsense you've got in your head, child; but remember one thing, as my old grandmother used to say, "Tell the truth, and shame the devil."'

Grace went out sadly to find Jemima, and assure her that, come what would, she must not tell a lie. And Jemima was first angry, and then cried, and said Grace would be the death of them all; for when father found out that Ned had taken up with bad companions, he would beat him till he was half dead, and Ned would run away and never come back, and then father would go to the public-house, as he always did when he was vexed, and get tipsy, and there would be an end of all comfort.

And then Jemima told Grace that father had not been tipsy for a week, and had paid for little Jim's schooling, a thing he had never done before, and given her some new clothes, all because the clergyman and Miss Burton had spoken kindly to him, and told him it was a pity that bright-eyed boy of his should be playing in the lane all day.

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The Policeman examining Grace.

And here was Grace going to spoil it all.

Poor little Grace had no one to tell her that she must do right and not mind what came of it, so, with a heavy heart, she left Jemima and went to the churchyard.

It seemed to her as if that grave which she so often visited was the gate of heaven, for there stray words and texts which her mother had taught her often came to her mind like rays of light from a happier land. Such an one came to her now — just a bit of the Catechism learnt at her mother's knee, a bit she had thought very hard at the time, but which had been so clearly explained to her that it came back to her now like a message straight from God.

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Grace being carried in the big Basket.

'To keep my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering.' Those were the words, and Grace resolved to abide by them should the magistrate demand to know about Ned.

But still if she could she would keep silence for Jemima's sake.

Aunt Patience took Grace to Barford, and to the surprise of both, when they reached the court, there was Jemima, neatly dressed in the new clothes her father had given her. She had come to watch over Ned, poor child.

Things went badly, it seemed to Grace. There stood the dreadful young man who had seized her and snatched her money

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from her, and by his side was Ned, who had been taken up on suspicion as a friend of his.

Grace was too terrified to say anything but Yes and No when she was questioned; she only kept one thing in mind each time, —to tell the truth. When all was over, she hardly heard the magistrate praise her, and tell her she was a straightforward, little witness.

As they left the court Jemima came up to her, and whispered:

'Don't cry, Grace, I'm not angry with you; it's three years in a Reformatory because it's his first offence, and that, perhaps, will make a good lad of him;' and the poor anxious little sister burst into tears herself, in which Grace joined.

'If we'd been taught not to tell lies, nor steal, but mind the Bible and the Catechism like you,' sobbed poor Jemima, 'we might have been better; but now Miss Burton 's teaching me, and Ned, the gentleman says, will be well done to and taught good, and if father only gives up drink maybe we shall do yet.'

Miss Patience was so upset by this speech from poor neglected Jemima Wright, that she first blew her nose, and then, in a voice that sounded almost cross, it was so hoarse, bade Jemima get into the spring-cart that was to take them back to the village, for the poor little girl had walked the five miles into Barford that morning.

And presently she was more upset still, for when Jemima recovered her voice she said, 'I've fifteen shillings of your money, ma'am, and I 'll make the rest up when I can.'

Miss Patience hardly understood it at first, but when she found that out of love for her brother Jemima had begged, and saved, and scraped to collect the money that had been stolen, she was full of remorse that she had thought so badly of the child.

True, poor Jemima in her ignorance had fancied that if she could repay the money all danger of a prison for Ned would be over; and she had thought much more of this than of returning the money, because it was honest to do so; but still, the perseverance and sisterly love she had shown was enough to convince Miss Patience that a little notice and a little kindness would have won this poor waif over to a better way of living, and with her, perhaps, her family. And Miss Patience had lived for several years in the same village with her, and had never tried to do it!

And now Miss Burton had begun the task and little Grace was helping her.

Three months later, and there was the sound of happy voices in the lane outside the Rectory gates.

A little procession came in sight.

Two clean, well-dressed lads were carrying a wicker basket, in which sat a fair-haired, round-faced little girl.

For this was the day of the school-feast, and by special request Tom and Tim Wright had been to fetch Grace in a big basket borrowed from Miss Burton. Of course Grace could have walked, but it was a pleasure to Tom and Tim to carry her, and Grace was young enough to enjoy the fun of a ride.

But where was Jemima? Much too busy even to fetch Grace.

She was busy to the last moment before the feast, setting father's tea against he came in from work, making a bit of toast and putting it to warm by the fire; for there was no Aunt Selina now, she had married and gone into Barford.

Perhaps it was all for the best, for she would have been worried with all Jemima's new ways, the scrubbing and cleaning which Miss Burton advised.

Father was not vexed, however, he even did a bit of whitewashing himself after hours; and, what with the Rector talking to him, and lending him books, and giving him odd jobs to do (for Wright was a clever man when sober), he had quite got out of the habit of going to the public-house.

This evening he was to look in at the Rectory after tea and help Mr. Burton to arrange the boys' games and races; so Jemima scampered off at the last minute quite happy, and she was soon sitting by Grace at one of the long tables in the Rectory field, as neat and tidy as her

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friend. Father's wages now were all brought home, and she and the boys had clothes as good as anyone's, she told Grace.

And it was all Grace's doing and Miss Burton's. But Grace said she had done nothing.

'You let me sit by you at the school that first day,' said Jemima, 'and stroked my hand when the other girls were all laughing, and I had just made up my mind never to come again.'

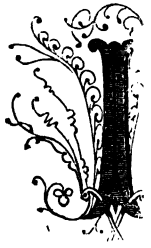
'But that was such a little thing,' said Grace.

'Well, little folks can only do little things, Miss Burton tells us,' said Jemima; 'and, O Grace, what do you think I heard to-day? That lad that was taken up with our Ned has got seven years in prison. I am glad now you told the truth about Ned, and he's safe in the Reformatory. Just think if he ever came to that!'

'Don't think of dreadful things to-day, dear Jemima,' said Grace, coaxingly; 'see, the games are beginning; isn't it fine? Aren't you glad you are one of Miss Burton's school-children, and aren't you glad Miss Burton came to Woodbury?'

'Yes, I am glad,' said Jemima; 'and for another reason, too, because she made you think of being my friend.' H. A. F.

THE BABY HIPPOPOTAMUS.



N an old Egyptian picture which still exists, a hunter is shown harpooning from a sort of boat-raft a hippopotamus, or river-horse, which is already exhausted by fatigue, loss of blood, and by several other harpoons fixed in its skin. The old Egyptian painters did not know anything of perspective, of the art of making objects look at their natural distances from each other. So we find at the bottom of the picture, among what are meant for the tall papyrus reeds, a baby hippopotamus hiding under the water. The picture, therefore, is meant to show the furious defence of her child by the struggling animal, and one cannot help pitying the poor mother. The little hippopotamus will soon have to rise to the surface to breathe, when it will be also caught as it comes up to see why its mother keeps floating motionless on the water in such a different way from what she used to do.

If not disturbed by man, the baby hippopotamus has a pleasant time enough of it. Now it is resting from play on the back of its parent when in the water. At another time it snoozes on the sunny sand, or among the rushes of the river-side. If it is hungry it is satisfied by the rich milk of its dam. But no such luck fell to the share of the little animal whose portrait we give from a photograph. If it had lived it might have enjoyed a sunny bit of sand and a plunge in deep water, like its free brethren in Africa. But, alas! confinement seems fatal to these babies, no matter whether they are born at Paris, at Rotterdam, or in London.

This baby hippopotamus first saw the light of day in London; its mother watched over it with anxious devotion, and if the care bestowed on the old animal was great, it was redoubled by its attendants and their chief when the little one arrived. I never saw it alive, and I do not know whether the cause of its death was found out. At the time when the drawing was taken, nobody could give a reason why it did not live. The little animal was about the size of a goodish pig, and very heavy for its size. In every wrinkle and fold of the skin it seemed almost a perfect copy of the old animal,—but, of course, softer. Let us hope that there will be another baby hippopotamus, and that the clever folk at the Zoological Gardens of London will succeed in keeping it alive.

This baby hippopotamus was well and lively at first, and as nobody was allowed to disturb either the old or the young one, there seemed no reason why it should die. But you see their fine and convenient house in the Zoological Gardens is still a prison to these mighty creatures; there are wants we do not know of and cannot supply, and so the baby dies for lack of that blessing which every child has who reads this—the blessing of Freedom!

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Baby Hippopotamus.

'CHATTERBOX' Volume for 1871 is now ready, price 3s. and 5s.

The Volume of the 'PRIZE' for 1871 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'BABY'S SWING,' *will be* given *with the January Number of the* 'CHILDREN'S PRIZE 1872.' *New Subscribers are requested to order their 'Prize' immediately.*

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XII.] DECEMBER, 1871. [One Penny.

Charlie's Christmas.

'So climbing on the railings he saw a wondrous sight.'

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CHARLIE'S CHRISTMAS.

A SOFT white snow was falling,
The Christmas Eve, to greet,
As tired little Charlie
Came slowly up the street.

With thin, unchild-like face,
And garments old and worn,
With mass of tangled hair,
He looked indeed forlorn.

He slowly came along,
For alas! poor little child,
There was no pleasant fire for him
That night so bleak and wild.

He had no tender mother,
Nor father fond and true,
He had no little brother,
Or sister dear—like you.

Homeless, friendless, and forlorn,
He did not even know
That there was One above
Who pitied all his woe.

Charlie noticed at one window
The blind was not drawn quite,
So climbing on the railings
He saw a wondrous sight.

In the midst of the large room
There stood a Christmas Tree;
Charlie looked at it, and wondered
Whatever it could be.

Then slowly to himself he said,
'I really never knew
That dolls, and balls, and whips,
And such things ever grew.'

A group of merry children
The Christmas Tree stood round,
And low sweet music filled the room,—
How Charlie liked the sound!

He thought that it was sweeter
Than any German Band,
And tears fell as he listened,
And dropped upon his hand.

At length the music ceased, and then
The children laughed and sung,
But everything was quiet again
As a little bell was rung.

Very soon, a gentleman came forth,
And to the girls and boys,
From off the splendid Christmas Tree
He gave some pretty toys.

On a table near the glittering tree,
Lay a box of polished wood,
And the gentleman fitted in the key,
And wound it, as he stood.

Then from out the wondrous box
Came forth the music sweet;
As Charlie looked and listened,
He forgot the cold, dark street.

Forgot that he was hungry,
Forgot he had no home,
Forgot that through the weary night
The cold streets he must roam.

But suddenly from out the group,
There came a little boy,
Up to the window drew the blind,
And shut in all the joy.

Alas! poor little Charlie,
The tears fell thick and fast,
And as he turned away he sobbed,—
'I knew it could not last.'

Then onward went the tired feet,
Through the cold and dreary night,
No home!—no home! poor little one,
Oh, 'twas a piteous sight.

Next morning when the sunbeams
Shone on the frosty ground,
A policeman, tramping up and down
Upon his usual round,

Saw in one corner of the street
A little object lay,
And went to see what it could be
That bitter, wintry day.

It was a little child
With tangled, curly hair,
And upon the upturned face
A look of want and care.

The strong man raised him up,
And chafed his hands—in vain,
The spirit of the child had fled,
Charlie was free from pain.

For the 'Good Shepherd,' looking down
With tender, pitying love,
Had taken up His little lamb
To dwell with Him above.

ANNIE BARTON

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DAMSELS OF THE BIBLE.

THE DAMSEL AT PHILIPPI.

THE last of the damsels of whom we have an account in the Bible is spoken of in the 16th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. She was a poor heathen slave, whom St. Paul met with in the second of his three missionary journeys. Unless children who read this chapter of the Acts have had it explained to them, they do not know that it tells us about the most important event which has ever taken place in that quarter of the globe where we English people live. This event was the bringing over of Christianity into Europe by St. Paul, more than 1800 years ago. After they had sailed from Troas in Asia Minor, St. Paul and his companions landed in Europe at Neapolis, and from thence they went to Philippi, *the chief city in that part of Macedonia* (verse 12), which was a portion of the country now called European Turkey. The first in Europe who became a believer in the Lord Jesus was a woman of Philippi named Lydia (verses 14 and 15), and the first for whom a miracle was there worked was also a woman, the damsel of whom we are now speaking.

She was not only a heathen and a slave, but was possessed with an evil spirit, such as those that were cast out by our blessed Lord. This miserable condition of hers was a means by which her masters gained much wealth. Indeed, it is likely that a company of men had joined in buying her for a large sum from her owner on purpose to enrich themselves by her earnings. Our little readers will wonder what could be the use of a damsel who was miserably kept in bondage by an evil spirit. Whatever words she spoke were put into her mind by the devil's power, and were uttered aloud at his bidding. Because of this she was famed for having *a spirit of divination* (verse 16), that is, for having the power to foretell future events. In those ignorant, superstitious times, it was thought that this power was given her by Apollo, the false god that was worshipped at Philippi and other places as the god of prophecy. People who wished to have their fortunes told went to the damsel to find out from her what was going to happen to them. It was this which made her so valuable to her masters, as a large sum had to be paid them in return for whatever she foretold.

The worship of Apollo and the prophecies he was supposed to make known to those who had the *spirit of divination*, were only a mixture of lying, cheating, and superstition. But we do not know how far the evil spirit that possessed this damsel was permitted by Almighty God to tell what human beings could not find out for themselves. What we do most surely know is, that every kind of prying into the future is strictly forbidden in Holy Scripture. For instance, in the 18th chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses says, that all who use divinations, all enchanters, witches, workers of charms, consulters of spirits, wizards, and the like, *are an abomination unto the Lord* (verses 10–12), and that the having such people among them was one reason why the Canaanites were to be driven out of the Promised Land. Those who seek their help share their sin. From the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets, we find that going to consult sorcerers of various kinds was one of the causes that led to the Seventy Years' Captivity of the Jews in Babylon. We would most earnestly ask every reader of the *Prize* never to listen, even for a minute, to anyone who pretends to tell fortunes, or to work charms, or to hold conversation in any way with the spirits of the dead. When tempted by such people, or by those who believe in their power, it will be helpful to call to mind the words of Him who alone knows what is in the future: *Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God* (Lev. xix. 31).

Day after day the damsel saw St. Paul and his three companions, Silas, St. Luke, and Timothy, passing along the streets of Philippi on their way to the place of prayer by the river-side. As they went she fol-

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The Damsel at Philippi

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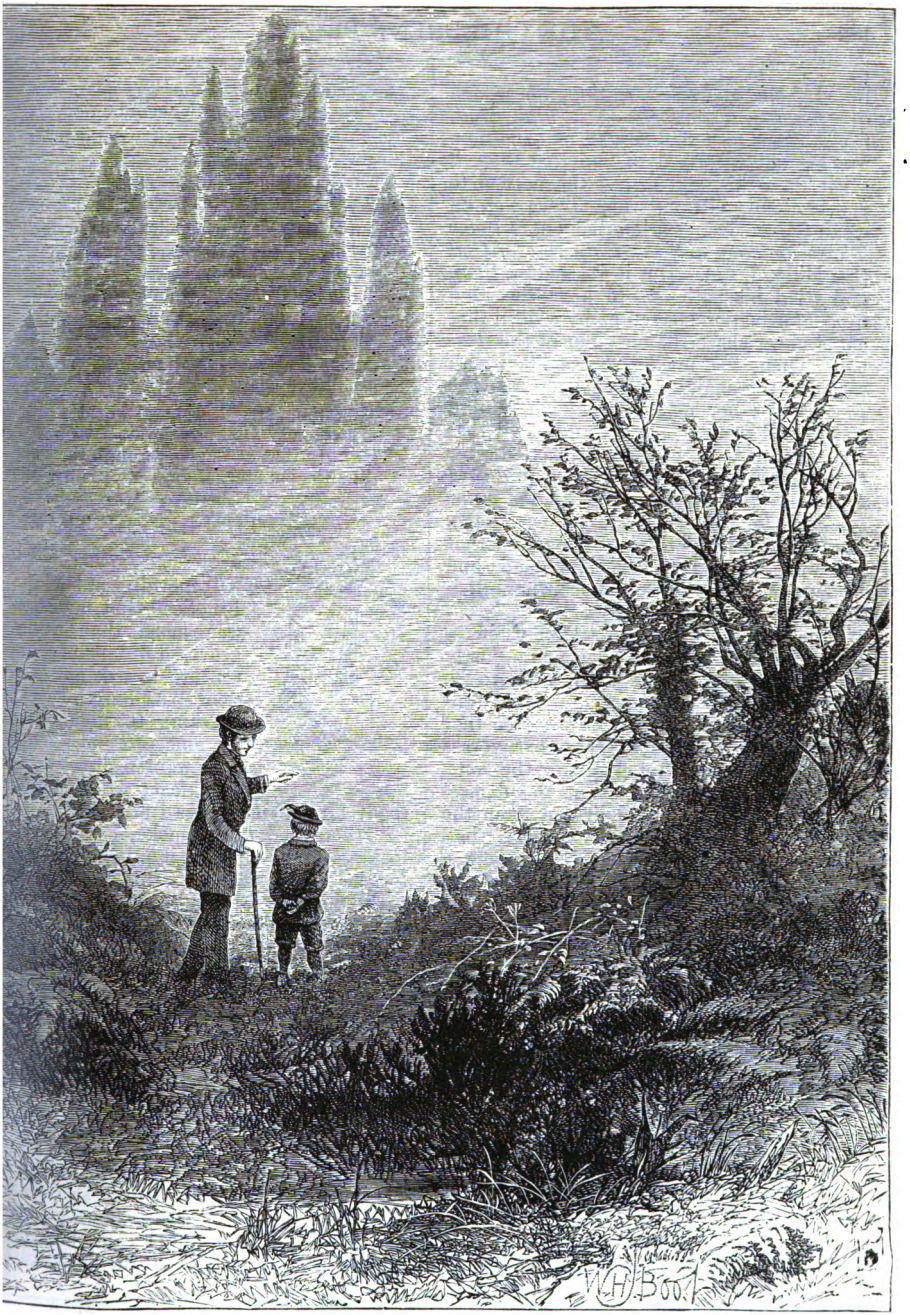

The Morning Mist.

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lowed them, *and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.* We are not surprised to find that the evil spirit knew this, and forced the damsel to cry it aloud, just as when Jesus was on earth the unclean spirit cried out, *I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God* (St. Mark, i. 24). But it grieved St. Paul, and tried his patience, to hear the glad news of salvation spoken of by a devil that could never share the blessings of the Gospel. Then, too, his heart was filled with pity for the maiden whose body was the property of her masters, while her mind was in still worse slavery to the devil that possessed her. When she had cried after them many days, St. Paul *turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her* (verse 18). *And he came out the same hour*, so that she was restored to her right mind, and became of no more use to her owners than any common slave.

How her selfish masters took their revenge upon St. Paul and Silas, how unjustly the magistrates caused them both to be beaten and put in prison, and how wonderfully the holy men were set free that same night, we read in the next verses of this most interesting chapter of the Acts. But we hear no more about the damsel whom the Apostle had delivered from the bondage of Satan. We may hope that, like many another slave, she became a Christian. If so, she was one of the members of that Philippian Church for whom St. Paul had most tender affection, to whom he wrote as his *brethren, dearly beloved and longed for* (Philip. iv. 1), whom he thought of as his *joy and crown*, and of whom he could say, that He who had begun the good work in them would perform it to the day of Jesus Christ (i. 6).

THE MORNING MIST.

LOOK, William, how the morning mists
Have covered all the scene;
Nor house, nor hill, canst thou behold,
Grey wood or meadow green.

The distant spire across the vale
These floating vapours shroud;
Scarce are the neighbouring poplars seen,
Pale, shadowed in the cloud.

But seest thou, William, where the mists
Sweep o'er the southern sky,
The dim effulgence of the sun
That lights them as they fly?

Soon shall that glorious orb of day
In all his strength arise,
And roll along his azure way,
Through clear and cloudless skies.

Then shall we see across the vale
The village spire so white,
And the grey wood and meadows green
Shall live again in light.

So, William, from the moral world
The clouds shall pass away,
The light that struggles through them now
Shall beam eternal day.—SOUTHEY.

THE LITTLE TRAMP.

(*Concluded from p.* 163.)

NEXT morning at breakfast I noticed that my father was more than usually grave. I did not of course venture to ask any questions. At length he said, speaking to my mother, "I must go and see that poor woman directly after breakfast; will you make ready for me the things I named?"

'He turned as he spoke, and saw me looking, as I suppose, inquiringly at him, for he said, "I was sent for late last night, Charlotte, to see the mother of those poor children we met yesterday in the village, and I think she will die." "Where is she, father?" I asked. "At Chapman's cottage, in the Combe. She was taken very ill not far off, and that kind-hearted Mrs. Chapman gave her and the children shelter, and sent for me." I begged to go with him on his walk, but he replied that it was better for him to go alone.

'I remember how anxiously I waited all that morning in the hope of hearing some tidings of the children, and I am afraid that Miss Burns found me a dull scholar at my lessons. My curiosity, however, was not gratified till my father came in at our early dinner, and said that the doctor gave

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no hope of the poor woman's life, and that the man had gone off early in the morning, no one knew whither. My father added, that the woman said that he was not the children's father. Their own father had died in a hospital more than twelve months before.

'That night the woman died. When I asked my father about the children he told me that Mrs. Chapman had kindly promised to keep them with her till after the funeral, and that then they must go into the workhouse, where, he added, they would be much better brought up than they would have been had their mother continued her wretched mode of life, and that he should see to them from time to time.

'When my father came home from the funeral, the third day after the events I have already related to you, he began to tell my mother that Farmer Jones had been to see him about the children. Then, observing that I was in the room, he ceased speaking. He added, however, that I might, if I liked, come and listen to what he had to say. You may suppose how glad I was not to be sent out of the room. My father went on to say that Farmer Jones intended to take little Katie to live with him. Mrs. Jones had fancied a likeness between her and their own lost little girl, and had begged to have her. Mrs. Chapman was to keep the youngest child at my father's expense till she was six months older, and then she would be placed in the workhouse with her brother and sister, who were to be taken there on the morrow.

'So little Katie became an inmate of Farmer Jones's house, and was as her own little daughter to Mrs. Jones. I often used to go and see her, and I remember how glad I was whenever my father in our walks took the road towards Mrs. Jones's farm. The baby, of whom Mrs. Chapman had taken charge, did not live many weeks after her poor mother's death. Now and then my father rode over to the workhouse to see the two other children.

'Things went on in this way for some years, when after a short illness Farmer Jones died. He did not leave Mrs. Jones so well off as had been expected. She gave up business, and by my father's advice took a small cottage in the village. At this time Katie was thirteen years of age, and was poor Mrs. Jones's one great delight and comfort. She quite leant on the child's love, and as it was now plain that Katie must be put in the way of earning her own living, the great fear which troubled Mrs. Jones was that she must part from Katie. My father again advised and helped her. Katie was placed with a respectable widow in the village to learn millinery, going every morning to her work, and returning in the evening to her kind protectress and second mother. Five more years passed away, and good 'Mrs Jones followed her husband to the grave. Katie nursed her with the tender love of an only child; and if any kind act was ever repaid in this world, Mrs. Jones felt that she had received a tenfold blessing for the love and care she had bestowed on the orphan child.

'Meanwhile I had married, and at the time of Mrs. Jones's death, you, Georgie, had been born about six months, and I proposed to my father that Katie should come to me and be your nurse. She accordingly came; and your good and kind nurse Catharine, children, is the same little Katie whom your grandfather and I met that November day by the roadside, and who answered my father's inquiry after her mother in the piteous words I have told you, "Up there, drinking beer." You will understand now, I think, why nurse will not allow all tramps to be bad people; and little May will also know why Nursie, as she says, always gives pennies to poor tramps who come begging to the door.'

'But what became of the other children, mother, who went to the workhouse?'

'The girl, my dears, went into service, where she continued for some years, and afterwards married; and when nurse went away last year for a holiday it was to pay this sister a visit; and I think Herbert will remember nurse's soldier brother, who came here about three years ago.'

'Oh, yes, mother!' said Herbert, 'I remember him quite well: and he told me stories about the war in the Crimea, and

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nurse said the other day that he is now a sergeant, and in India with his regiment.'

'I want you, then, my dear children,' continued Mrs. Penrose, 'to learn from the story I have told you not to speak or think hardly of all poor tramps you may meet on the highroads. Many tramps, I am sorry to say, are both idle and dishonest, and prefer to wander about the country, living by deceit and stealing, to the labour of earning an honest livelihood. But it is not for us to begin by speaking ill of people when we can know nothing of the story of their earlier lives; and as for the tramps' poor little children, they certainly, whatever their parents may be, must be thought and spoken of only with the deepest pity, and not, Georgie and Herbert, be called "horrid," or other hard names, because of their raggedness and of the sad contrast they present to the happy lot in life which it has pleased your heavenly Father to give you.' J. S. B.

COMING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

THERE was great anxiety in the Bell family lest George, the absent brother, should not come home in time for Christmas Day. His ship was in port they knew, but whether he would be able to get off duty immediately was uncertain. Father, Aunt Martha, Mary, Alice, Susy, and Brother Joe, were all assembled on Christmas morning; they went rather mournfully to church as no George appeared, but they came back gleefully, since their sailor-lad had crept into the old pew during the service, having taken the first train from Southampton.

It was eighteen months since he had last been amongst them. It was little wonder, therefore, that dinner took a long time because of the number of stories he had to

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Christmas Morning in Claythorpe Church.

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tell them, and the amount of home-tidings they had to give him.

George, however, amidst the happy medley of voices, was allowed to raise his loudest, for he had been in strange lands and seen strange sights—China, and India, and the wide sea, and he was ready enough to tell all that he knew about them.

'But what I thought of most, all the journey home, was to get back for Christmas.'

'It would have been nothing without you,' said Joe, the schoolboy, resting his knife and fork on the table, and gazing at Sailor George.

'Every one comes home for Christmas,' said little Susy.

'And that's what makes it such a happy time,' said Mary, the eldest sister, who was maid to a London lady, and had two precious days yearly at Christmas time to visit her family. 'Oh, George dear, if you could only manage always to come home for Christmas!'

But George had become strangely silent. His thoughts were no more at home with the happy, merry circle of brothers and sisters; they had wandered far away; and first they dwelt on a sick man lying faint and breathless in a small cabin. After that on a funeral at sea, that most touching of sights. And then in his mind he followed a letter, posted last evening, which would bear the tale of suffering and death to some happy family this Christmas morning.

No one to come home to them this Christmas-tide! Yet, could the season ever again be a happy one for them?

We shall see.

Christmas morning in Claythorpe Church. Holly and ivy, and green things everywhere. The church was fairly filled, for the country parish in which it stood: here the father of a family; there the gentle mother, bearing in her arms the child scarce older than the Babe of Bethlehem on that winter's morning long ago. But the eye chiefly rested on a little group gathered together in a front seat in the church. A group of girls, three children; one a woman, but young and bright; all four joining with glad, clear voices in the Christmas anthem.

All Claythorpe knew why the orphan daughters of their late vicar looked so bright and sang so gaily this Christmas morning.

Not alone the 'glad tidings' of the holy season filled their hearts with joy. They, too, were expecting a dear one home, a long-absent brother, who was to fill the father's chair, and be to them all they had lost in their parents. Little had been spoken of for days but the expected arrival of the ship which was to bring brother Charles back to them from India: and they, too, had felt a little disappointed when the church-bells rang out and he had not arrived. But Constance Raymond cheered her little flock, and took them to church with her, and tried to keep her attention to the service, while happy thoughts of earthly joys would wander in and distract her.

The postman comes late in country districts, and specially late on Christmas-day (when his budget contains so many loving greetings), so that not till they reached their tiny home again did they receive the letter which was to dash all their hopes to the ground.

Never again was Charles Raymond to see his native village, never to fill the father's place in the young sisters' home. A severe attack of Indian fever had laid him low soon after leaving Calcutta, and, despite sea-breezes and kind care, he had sunk under it, and died some ten days before reaching England. The captain of the vessel had written to Constance at her brother's request, telling the tale as gently and kindly as he could. But such tidings cannot be broken. They must fall as a terrible shock upon the hearts of those who receive them.

The poor little anthem-singers of the morning clung sobbing to their sister. It was a sad ending to their Christmas.

The next day Constance wrote to the captain begging further particulars. 'Who had attended on her brother in his illness? She would go anywhere, do anything, to speak with such a one.' The captain gave her the address of the ship's doctor, and added that a sailor-boy called George Bell had been Mr. Raymond's chief attendant, and had watched upon him with untiring faithfulness. He named the place where

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the boy lived, a small town not far from Claythorpe.

And so it came to pass that joy and sorrow met; George, who had come home for Christmas, was asked to go and tell his sad tale in the home of Mr. Raymond's sisters.

George felt a little awkward at first when he saw the pale faces and black dresses of the sisters. But he had so much to tell of the patient sufferer dying almost within reach of home, that he soon felt at ease again, and even the children hushed their sobs to listen to his words.

'You'll be wishing Christmas time struck out of the year, Miss,' said poor George at last: 'it will be a sore time for you now, I'm thinking; no one to come home to you any more.' And he brushed away a tear.

'No, George, we shan't wish that,' said Constance, bravely; 'we can't help but grieve now: but you know our brother has really gone home this Christmas; we could not wish him back again, we can only long to go to him.'

'And when the bells ring of a Christmas morning, and other people's folk come home?' said poor George, speaking aloud his pitiful thoughts for the bereaved family.

'Then we shall try and be glad too,' said Constance, firmly. '"Born that we no more may die." You know the hymn, George? That should comfort us. On Christ's birthday we shall always remember that our brother is gone home *too*, never to suffer and die again.'

'I shall tell them that at home,' said George, thoughtfully; 'for it might have been me.'

Christmas joys, the meeting of dear ones in an earthly home, are meant to make us glad, but the remembrance of the Holy Child, and why He was born into the world, should hold a deeper place in our hearts, and then no trouble nor bereavement can snatch our happiness from us. Since the Babe was born that first Christmas morning, our dear ones are safe whether on *earth* or in heaven.

Constance and her little flock still year by year sing the Christmas anthem with voices that hardly tremble, half thinking they catch an echo to their music from the brother who has gone Home. H. A.F.

BLIND MARGARET.

'GOD bless that dear little lad for his kindness to me!' said poor blind Margaret, as she leaned back in her old arm-chair, and rested her weary limbs after her walk into the town.

It had been a fine autumn afternoon, and old Margaret had been to make little purchases in the town, and she thought that with the aid of her stick, and the little glimmer of light that was still left to her, she could easily find her way, especially as she knew well every step of the road.

But the shades of evening gathered rapidly; and when poor Margaret came out of the grocer's shop, with her well-filled basket on her arm, the street lamps were lighted, and so many people were hurrying to-and-fro that her poor head was bewildered, and she could not tell which way to turn. So there she stood, that poor, lonely widow, trying to make out which way she ought to turn her steps.

Just then a party of noisy, merry boys came along, and noticing her confusion, one of them said to the rest, 'Let's play the old woman a trick, and lead her down a blind alley; it will be such fun!'

But among those thoughtless boys there was one brave, noble-hearted little fellow, and he instantly left his companions, and coming up close to her, said, 'Let me carry your basket for you, shall I?'

Old Margaret felt very grateful when she heard these kind words, but she was afraid to trust her basket with a stranger, so she replied,—'Thank you, boy, my basket's is not too heavy for my arm; but if you'd be so good as to walk home with me, I would be very thankful.'

Then he took the widow's hand, and placed it on his shoulder, that she might lean upon him, and off they trudged together to the snug little cot where old Margaret lived.

As soon as Albert saw her safely to the door he turned quickly, and with a cheery good-night, he started on his way home at a brisk run, hoping to be in time for tea.

And blind Margaret's eyes were full of tears, but not sad tears, as she went into her cottage, and her heart was full of thankfulness as she offered up a prayer to the throne of God, which brought down

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a real blessing upon the head of that kind little boy.

And Albert was a happy boy that night, for those words of the Master came into his mind, and stayed there, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.'

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'Baby's Swing,' *will be* given *with the January Number of* 'The Children's Prize, 1872.'

The Volume of the 'PRIZE' for 1871 is now Ready.

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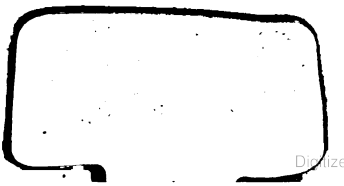
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